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A REVIVAL OF HUMANISM

by Paul Elmer More

UNDER the editorial supervision of Professor Norman Foerster, assisted by three other scholars, a group of fifteen writers have contributed to make a volume of essays under the collective title of *Humanism and America.** With a few exceptions the contributors range in age from thirty to forty-five years, being young enough to speak for the coming generation and old enough to have passed the first inexperience of youth. Some of the younger men have already made their mark in the critical contentions of the past four or five years; others will be scarcely known to the public. Inevitably the papers are not of equal weight and interest, but the high average of intelligence is heartening and, if it may be said without offence, a little surprising. As a whole the book seems to me, in its field, about the most significant event that has fallen under my notice in many years of reading and reviewing. I may say this without hesitation, because, though parts of an essay are reprinted from a recent publication of my own, I have written nothing for the volume, and my share in determining its character is altogether negligible.

Mr. Foerster calls attention to the fact that the contributors, though writing quite independently one of the other, "agree in certain broad, fundamental opinions"; and I have thought that I could not better serve the cause, of which the present work may be regarded as a spirited manifesto, than by pointing out what these common opinions are and by attempting to show the significance of the divergence where this begins. In this way I may perhaps contribute a little to a broader harmony of view and to a more efficient stand against the disrupting forces of anti-humanism, which are by no means silenced, however for the moment they may be put upon the defensive.

I

On one point the agreement is already complete. From the first sentence of the admirable preface provided by the editor to the concluding essay on "Courage and Education"

* *Humanism and America* edited by Norman Foerster. Farrar & Rinehart. $3.50. [A complete list of the contributors with the titles of their articles will be found at the conclusion of this paper.]

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by a senior student at Bowdoin College, one note is sounded over and over again: "The noise and whirl increase, the disillusion and depression deepen, the nightmare of Futility stalks before us". Futility is the final word: the literature and art most characteristic of the day are criticised as chaotic, joyless, devoid of beauty, comfortless, fretfully original or feebly conventional, impotent, futile. The blackness of the picture may be somewhat overlaid, as is the wont with those who are confessedly crying for reform; but no great movement for bettering conditions was ever carried to success without a clear sense of wrong to be righted, no hope for the future was ever effective until the bubble of self-complacency was pricked. Conceit of the present is the most deadly bondage of the human spirit, and against this devastating conceit the revolt of so many enlightened minds among the generation just reaching maturity is a sign of the times that may well challenge the attention of those who are still wavering in their allegiance to one side or the other. They may see that the best way to be modern is to break away from the fetters of "modernism".

On another point our humanists are well agreed: they all perceive, and more or less explicitly declare, that the present confusion in letters is connected with a similar confusion in our ideas of life. They see that as we live, so shall we paint and write, or that, as Plato would put it, as we paint and write, so shall we come to live. They might give different answers to the question whether, in the large innovations of time, art precedes in moulding life or life in moulding art; they would all admit, I think, that the two are mutually interactive, and that there can be no great and simple and sincere art without ideals of greatness and simplicity and sincerity prevailing in society. Handsome is that handsome does. Perhaps the finest expression of this rather obvious truth comes to us in the present volume from one whose subtleties of sympathy have not always in the past led him to speak so uncompromisingly, to the effect that "to understand any nobly conceived work of art, one must have lived nobly in deed, in imagination, or in both". Mr. Mather for the moment is thinking rather of the appreciator of art than of the creator, but his maxim, as I am sure he would admit, merely repeats and extends the famous, and sometimes disputed, saying of Longinus, that "sublimity is the echo of a great soul".* In this spirit Mr. Mather continues (and I wish I could quote at greater length):

> . . . appreciation really requires a right and balanced attitude towards life. It was really more important for Florence that her great citizens, while bowing to the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome, wanted a full and honourable life in Florence—it was really more important, I say, that they cared discriminatingly for the dignity of their ordinary activities and for the authority of their faith, than that they cared *specifically* for painting, sculpture, and architecture. In short, some aristocratic vision of the good life has always been the foundation on which great national art has been reared in the past.

That is the note common to all the writers of this symposium, "the consciousness", as Mr. Stanley P. Chase expresses it, "of intellectual defeat and spiritual dismay" behind the spasmodic futility of modern literature. And it is no light matter that this clear consciousness has made itself felt among a group of men who (I omit the exceptions) are not old enough to be open to the charge of decrying the present because it is not their own cherished past, or who, on the other hand, are not so young as to take delight, like the puppies of Plato's *Republic*, in the mere act of tearing things to pieces. They speak, as a body, with a sobriety of judgment and an

* Longinus was not contradicting himself when he wrote: "I feel almost absolved from the necessity of premising at any length that sublimity is a certain distinction and excellence in expression, and that it is from no other source than this that the greatest poets and writers have derived their eminence and gained an immortality of renown". Great art, which is what he means by the "sublime", would be the noble expression of a noble attitude towards life.

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earnestness of conviction that must carry weight with any reader not snared by the Circean flatteries of the present. And it is to be observed that, up to this point, our militant critics not only agree among themselves but are also in accord with those novelists and poets much in the public eye against whom their challenge of humanism is intentionally directed. If I understand what is going on in France—and my opinion is confirmed by those who have more knowledge of the subject than I can pretend to—Proust and André Gide and their followers are animated by a determination to face the facts and to make of their art an unflinching record of the intellectual defeat and spiritual dismay they find about them in actual life and within themselves. I have read the same thing of James Joyce, who to the mind of his eulogists is a prophetic voice denouncing the age for its meaningless unrest.

But if harmony reigns between the two camps of humanism and anti-humanism up to this point, beyond it divergence begins and widens. In the first place these novelists and poets of discontent, who are deliberately preying on the intellectual defeat and spiritual dismay of the times, as vultures fatten themselves on carrion, whatever their moral pretext, are in no true sense of the word working for regeneration. They perceive the evil state of society and portray it with gloating contempt. But having no faith in the possible dignity of individual human life, they offer a very dubious alliance to humanism. Rather, on the contrary, they fill their public with a self-congratulating superiority of knowingness, as if to know the sickness about him were sufficient to relieve a man in a hospital of the need of a physician for himself. Where all without exception are depraved, it is a virtue to admit the bitter truth. Thus these apostles of depravity flatter men by degrading mankind; whereas the beginning of humanism, as of religion, is the humility that goes with a sense of personal responsibility.

In the end the distinguishing mark, and largely the cause, of the pessimism of modern literature is a false philosophy. It looks upon human nature with the inflamed vision of a monocular Cyclops, seeing man only as the slave of his temperament, or as a mechanism propelled by complexes and reactions, or as a vortex of sensations, with no will to govern himself, no center of stability within the flux, no direction of purpose to rise above the influences that carry him hither and thither. At the same time many of these monists are aware that the literature dependent upon such a life has become, like its subject, sicklied with the depression of conscious futility. It is conscience, they say, makes cowards of us all. It is conscience that, unsubdued by all the pleas of a monistic psychology, rebellious to the truths of reason, still invades the unenlightened mind with a sense of futility and remorse. In life the traditional emotions persist in overriding theory; but art is our own to fashion as we will. Let us therefore divorce art from life by exorcizing the phantom of conscience. Then naturalism, being perfect and consistent with itself, will no longer depress its votaries but fill them with the exaltation of liberty. Hence the endeavor in one way or another to dehumanize art by a callous indifference to sentiment which is often confounded with sentimentality, or by the irony of cold contemplation as if the artist, *qua* artist, stood outside of the network of human relations, or by a brutal avowal of irresponsibility, or by a frank revelling in ugliness, or by the glorification of self-expression as a substitute for self-development. Hence too the innumerable treatises now coming from the press, that chatter about the theory of criticism instead of criticising, as if somehow or other, as art can be detached from life, so criticism can be detached from art. I would not imply that criticism as a means to the appreciation of art may not, for convenience's sake, be isolated from its end and so studied in abstraction; but in many of these works, including

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the pseudo-scientific treatises of Mr. I. A. Richards, one detects a kind of tacit assumption that if we could perfectly analyze the nature of the instrument, we should be relieved of all worry about the nature of the object for which the instrument is to be used. As if knowledge of the structure of a saw and hammer would make a good carpenter.

Against this monism and its fruits all our militant humanists, if I understand them, are openly or virtually in protest. The question at issue is thus ultimately one of philosophy or psychology. Against those who teach that man is totally submerged in natural law, the humanist lays emphasis on that in man which distinguishes him generically from other animals and so in one part of his composite being lifts him out of the more narrowly defined kingdom of nature; and the humanist assumes for himself this title as opposed to the naturalist because this superadded element, or faculty, however named, is what marks off a man as *human*. Against those who still hold that man is only a fragmentary cog in the vast machine which we call the universe, moved by the force of some relentless, unvarying, unconscious law, the humanist asserts that we are individual personalities, endowed with the potentiality of free will and answerable for our choice of good or evil. Against those who reduce man to a chaos of sensations and instincts and desires checking and counter-checking one another in endlessly shifting patterns, the humanist points to a separate faculty of inhibition, the inner check or the *frein vital*, whereby these expansive impulses may be kept within bounds and ordered to a design not of their making. Against those who proclaim that a man can only drift, like a rudderless ship, with the weltering currents of change, the humanist maintains that he is capable of self-direction, and that character, as different from native temperament, is a growth dependent on clarity and strength of purpose. Against those who, to appease the stings of conscience, assure us that we are what we are by no fault of our own, that, as we have no responsibility for our character, so the lesson of wisdom is to shuffle off any sense of regret or remorse or fear; and against those who go further in flattery and, through each and every appearance of delinquency, assert the instinctive total goodness of unredeemed nature—against these the humanist contends that as free agents we are accountable for defalcations and aberrations and that self-complacency is the deadliest foe to human excellence. On the other hand, the humanist will not stand with those who jeer at human nature, as if men were in no better state than rats in a trap, rushing distractedly hither and thither, hurling themselves upon their bars in a pitiable frenzy of impotence.

In their contention with the naturalists who in one form or another have for some time dominated the public mind and controlled the springs of literature, our rebels argue that their doctrine of humanistic dualism is no insubstantial web of fancy worn to veil the hard facts of life, but the outcome of our surest observation and of our most immediate self-knowledge. Such a dualism, as Mr. G. R. Elliott reasons, "is less *naïve* than the theory of universal continuity; is better grounded in universal human experience; and, above all, is more truly accordant with the profound division which any thinking man may find within himself today when he is sufficiently self-reliant and experimental to plumb beneath the surfaces where our ephemeral psycho-physicisms weave and flutter". And, replying to those who revolt from the irrational aspect of dualism, Mr. Elliott continues:

> . . . Recently humanism, in its attempt to fulfil and deepen the experimentality of the modern spirit, has of necessity placed its chief emphasis upon that inward division. It has insisted that the *opposition* between the higher and lower wills within us, whether they be called "divine" and "natural" or what not, is essentially inexplicable by expert reason and is nevertheless, from the present standpoint of human happi-

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ness, the most important feature of the universe arrived at by free and full experimentation. This humane *dualism* strikes at the very heart of modern pride, the pride of spiritual *monism*. It sets a true immediacy over against a false immediacy. It assigns a central value to the paradox established by the immediate experience of Everyman when he tries (in the terminology of common sense) to be "at one with himself" by keeping his "better self" above his "worser self".

It may seem that the movement I am describing is essentially negative, with no positive program to offer in place of the errors it would combat. And it is true that as matters now stand a good deal of the energy of its supporters is expended in aggressive protest. But there are times when it is necessary to demolish before building, just as it is of no avail to propose a career of wholesome activity to a sick man until the roots of his disease are eradicated. And there is this to be said in defence of a militant policy: nothing is more likely to draw a group of men together and to prepare them for a concerted advance than the awareness of a common antipathy. The first step in a vigorous campaign must be to distinguish clearly between friend and foe.

Now one certain result of the volume we have under consideration will be to set the contributors and those for whom they speak in sharp contrast not only with the enemies who openly glory in degrading man to the naturalistic level but with those ambiguous flatterers of human nature who more or less speciously claim the title of allies. No excuse remains for muddle-headed critics to compromise the movement by accepting, for example, the saccharine simplicity of that Dr. Charles Francis Potter who recently has acquired a kind of newspaper notoriety (extending, to my knowledge, as far as Lahore, India) by launching a "new religion" of "humanism" wherein humanity is to be enthroned in the place of God, and who, in his initial address, mentioned Mr. Babbitt and myself, among others, as associates in the foundation. The *Commonweal* of October 16, 1929, made the proper reply to such impertinence: "Whoever may have said that man is inherently good, it was certainly not Professor Babbitt; the diverse negators of the supernatural have many names, but that of More is not among them". It is not the least merit of Mr. Babbitt's *Essay at Definition* that it brushes aside the pretensions of a number of usurpers in the field, including M. Sylvain Lévi (who makes Diderot a humanist), Mr. Lewis Mumford (who performs a like service for Walt Whitman), Mr. F. C. S. Schiller of Oxford (who exalts Protagoras as a humanist above Plato), and that loquacious apostle of sweetness and darkness, Professor John Dewey, and ending with this comment on Mr. Walter Lippmann's *A Preface to Morals*:

> . . . he would have us believe that any one who has become disinterested after the scientific fashion has got the equivalent not only of humanism but of "high religion". By thus dissimulating the gap between the wisdom of the ages and the wisdom of the laboratory, he is flattering some of the most dangerous illusions of the present time. He escapes from the main humanitarian tendency to give to feeling a primacy that does not belong to it, only to encourage its other main tendency to accord to physical science a hegemony to which it is not entitled.

In an epoch weltering through a morass of *isms* it is well to know definitely how humanism is opposed to naturalism, and wherein it differs from its presumptive brother, humanitarianism. So much in defence of the aggressive method of warfare employed by the fighting wing of the new movement.

But if humanism has its value as a clear-cut condemnation of certain tendencies always at work in life and literature, though not always so obstreperous as at the present day, it should not be regarded as a mere policy of opposition and obstruction with nothing positive of its own to offer. As a matter of fact it is rather the forces under

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attack that are open to the charge of negation, and they are under attack for that very reason. Like the naturalist and the humanitarian, the humanist, as Mr. Foerster states in his preface, may take for his creed the saying that the proper study of mankind is man; and he may join with them in adding that the purpose of such study is to enable mankind to perceive and realize its humanity. But just here difference makes itself felt. The humanist is positive in his assertion that the distinguishing quality of humanity is something overlooked by the hostile camp. Both would admit that man is the measure; but it is the naturalist who denies the existence of that element of man's composite being which the humanist affirms to be the normal standard of measurement. Again it is the humanist who takes into positive account the value of tradition as a complement to the limitations of the individual, and who regards the present as a small but integral part of the long experience of the human race. Nor is it true that he would stifle the creative impulses or smother the joy of living by the restrictions of a barren discipline. The law of proportion and measure and the need of self-restraint are indeed words often on his lips; but he believes that only by such discipline in the mind of the artist can the higher creative forces be liberated. He would put a check upon the spasms of eccentricity to the end that the imagination may move largely in its work of genuine originality.

As between the humanist and the naturalist it is the former who stands for the great affirmation; it is the latter who, through obstinate ignorance or in the name of pseudo-science, limits and contracts and distorts and denies.

II

So far my aim has been to define, I will not say the new, but the newly advocated, humanism, and to this end I have endeavored to bring out the singular and impressive unanimity among the subscribers to the recently published manifesto. I have not spoken for myself, though it is scarcely necessary to add that I am in entire sympathy with the platform thus expounded. The task has been a pleasant one for me and, I trust, not unprofitable for the reader, for there is a good deal of confusion in the minds of onlookers as to what the movement really signifies and what the battle is all about. And for the sake of clarity and consistency it would be well, as etymologically it is sound, to reserve the use of the word humanism to this field in which harmony reigns, and to refrain carefully from extending the term to the outlying region where the advocates of humanism, while remaining loyal to their common cause, find themselves otherwise disunited. It is an old maxim of war, to divide and conquer; and a good many assaults of the enemy would be frustrated if the defenders of the cause did not allow the points on which they differ to create an appearance of discord there where none exists. In what follows I shall speak for myself, though hoping and believing that my opinions will meet with a fair amount of assent. And in so speaking I would insist that nothing I shall say should be taken as a covert retractation of what has preceded, and particularly, if the personal note may here be intruded, that nothing should be interpreted as indicating a rift between myself and my comrade-in-arms of long standing, Mr. Babbitt, in our attitude towards the combined forces of anti-humanism.

The question to be considered is the relation of humanism to religion. Here the reader of Mr. Foerster's miscellany will have observed a divergence of views, although, perhaps for strategical reasons, perhaps in part because of a little uncertainty remaining in the minds of the contributors themselves, the matter has been kept rather in the background. However that may be, by reading between the lines or in some cases by taking into account knowledge otherwise obtained, one becomes aware that the allies are divided

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into three camps over the issue of religion. A few would appear to be actually hostile to any belief in the supernatural as essentially anti-humanistic; in one person I know this to be the case, though it would not be guessed from his contribution to the present volume. Others, the majority I suspect, are friendly enough to religion in itself, but either have so vague a conception of its nature and function that practically it fades out of view, or, having clear views of what religion means to life, feel nevertheless that for the regeneration of art the program of humanism is adequate in and of itself. The remainder, some two or three perhaps, hold that without a close alliance between humanism and religion the former is shut off from its chief source of vitality. That is the issue; it cannot be bludgeoned into silence or circumvented.

For my own part, let me admit that to some extent I have been led to revise my earlier position by a number of recent criticisms, ranging from the ignorant and conceited outburst of Mr. Allen Tate on the "Fallacy of Humanism" in the *Criterion* for July, 1929, and the *Hound & Horn* for January, 1930, to the courteous and thoughtful note on the "High Lights of Humanism" by Mr. George N. Shuster in the *Commonweal* for April 17, 1929. Mr. Tate argues from some vague and indigested "philosophy" which I find difficult to comprehend, whereas Mr. Shuster speaks with the precision of an enlightened Roman Catholic; but they agree in complaining that humanism fails to offer any clear positive basis on which the mind and heart of man may rest. Now from one point of view it would be easy to retort, as I have already attempted to do, that humanism, tested by comparison with its lower rival, has the strength of a great affirmation; but from another point of view the concurrence of critics otherwise so contrary-minded—and I have named only two out of many—has combined with certain questionings from my own inner experience to compel me to reconsider the whole matter. Something must be wanting to the program of reform; there is some incompleteness here that explains this common uneasiness of critics so diverse. What is it? The answer has come to me in two words: purpose and values. Can humanism, of itself, unaided, provide the purpose and values it needs for its fulfilment and without which it cannot pass from the purely critical to the productive state? Must it not for its driving force depend on religion? The question is primarily pragmatic, but at the last it involves a whole philosophy of faith.

Now in one sense humanism takes its stand unhesitatingly on the affirmation of purpose. Its animus against naturalism is based on the evident fact that the rejection of free will deprives life of any possibility of purpose and leaves man a passive victim of chance or fate. It perceives that a literature depicting our adventures in such a universe must degenerate into the clever futilities of an Aldous Huxley or the obscene rigmarole of a James Joyce, or, seeking to escape the curse of impotence, into the sadism of a Robinson Jeffers. But purpose of what? Again the answer is ready: purpose to put back into life the values of which a false psychology had emptied it. There is that in every human being which it behooves him to know and cherish, a potentiality which it is worth his while to develop at any cost, a goal of perfection towards which all his energy should be directed—the high value of being a man. The program, laid out so long ago by the great Stagirite, has the ringing appeal of veracity. It is true, every word of it: yet is it quite all the truth? The high value of being a man—is that *telos* attainable, is it even approachable, without religion?

The question disquiets me as a humanist. It vexed Aristotle, and drove him on to make his vast plunge into the metaphysics of the Absolute. I read him, and am still disquieted. I turn to my great Aristotelian friend of the present, from whom I have so often found help in intellectual difficulties, but in this

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matter I am still left unsatisfied. Mr. Babbitt admits "an element of truth in the assertion of Plato that things human cannot be properly known without a previous insight into divine things". He goes further than this, and accepts the thesis of Pascal to the effect "that unless man has the support of the supernatural, unless in short he attains to true humility, he will fall fatally either into the Stoic pride or else, through the intermediary stage of scepticism, into the Epicurean relaxation". He holds that "the humanist will finally . . . have to take sides in the debate between naturalists and supernaturalists"; and he ranges himself "unhesitatingly on the side of the supernaturalists". The language is strong enough. Yet when I try to grasp what Mr. Babbitt means precisely by the supernatural, I am held at bay by his sweeping reluctance, veiled perhaps but deeply felt, to associate it with any kind of "dogmatic or revealed religion". On the other hand the "religious insight" which he would retain as an effective background for humanism, leaves me still asking: insight into what? The attempt to give "definite content" to this insight by identifying it with the "higher immediacy" might have satisfied Buddha, though even that is doubtful; certainly Plato would not have recognized it as equivalent to his "insight into things divine", or Pascal as affording "support of the supernatural". Nor does it seem to me to meet the clear conviction held by Sophocles or by any other of the great humanists of ancient Greece.

The cause of humanism is identical, as we have seen, with belief in free will and purpose as the traits that distinguish humanity from nature or, if you prefer, from the rest of nature.* And so far the humanist has no need to call in the sanctions of the supernatural in the guise of revelation. As Mr. Babbitt puts it with force and finality: "why not affirm it [man's higher will, or "immortal essence presiding like a king over his appetites"] first of all as a psychological fact, one of the immediate data of consciousness, a perception so primordial that, compared with it, the deterministic denials of man's moral freedom are only a metaphysical dream?" So far the way of the humanist is clear. But purpose in the direction of free will implies the realization of values. And here the difficulties begin. Why should I propose to myself a line of life which requires a constant exercise of choice and restraint, in themselves painful to the natural man, unless something of value is to be attained thereby? Why should I not follow the sway of temperament and satisfy all the desires of nature as they arise? Mr. Babbitt, I know, has an answer to these questions. "In his attempt," he says, "to show the inadequacy of humanism apart from dogmatic and revealed religion, Mr. T. S. Eliot has painted a picture of the humanist exercising in a sort of psychic solitude self-control purely for the sake of control." And against this picture Mr. Babbitt, forgetting, as it seems to me, the full importance of the supernatural already conceded by himself, cites the communion of souls described by Aristotle as attainable on the purely humanistic level by the act of self-control, and upholds worldly happiness as a sufficient guerdon. And Mr. G. R. Elliott (who otherwise stands with Mr. T. S. Eliot for dogmatic and revealed religion, rather than for what may be called just religion) puts the case even more emphatically: "Humanism is the study and practice of the principle of human happiness *uncomplicated* by naturistic dogmas on the one side and religious dogmas on the other".

* A certain amount of ambiguity adheres inevitably from historical usage to the words "natural" and "supernatural". One may, and often does, limit the term "nature" to that which is common to all animals including man, and designate the distinguishing faculty of man as "supernatural". Or one may, and often does, speak of that which pertains to man alone as his "higher nature", while that which man possesses in common with other animals is called his "lower nature". In this case the "supernatural" will properly designate the other worldly elements of religion whether known by revelation or by intuition.

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That blessed word happiness! If only we were sure of attaining it on the human-level, how the problem of purpose and value would be simplified! How easy the whole matter would be! Happiness. I cannot forget the terrible ending of *Vanity Fair*: "Ah! *Vanitas Vanitatum*! which of us is happy in this world? Which of us has his desire? or, having it, is satisfied?—come, children, let us shut up the box and the puppets, for our play is played out". And I am haunted by the refrain of so many men who have drunk deep of the chalice of mortal life and found always at the bottom the *amari aliquid*: Abd-ar-Rahman, that great caliph, who at the end counting up his days could remember only twenty of happiness; Septimius Severus, master of the world, with his dying comment, *Omnia fui, et nil expedit*; Solon, with his famous caution, "Count no man happy until he is dead"; Socrates, the embodiment of self-control and good cheer, who, to comfort his friends in the hour of his condemnation to death, reminded them that few of our days or nights could equal in happiness a time of deep and dreamless sleep; Johnson, the sturdy champion of British common sense, denouncing as a liar any man who dared call himself happy unless drunk; our own Edison, who at least has reaped all manner of worldly success yet declares that he has never known a happy man. But there is no need to multiply random examples. It is always the same story, whether the word comes from the East or the West, from the North or the South—always the bitter truth: In this world we have no abiding city; he who thinks to find peace in this mortal life is pursuing a phantom more elusive than the winds. It may be possible to achieve a kind of simulacrum of happiness by a dull or bovine acquiescence in things as they are, or by an indefatigable activity that leaves no time for reflection, or even by a cunningly managed pursuit of worldly pleasures; but such a state is precarious always, and at the best devoid of the "high seriousness", the *spoudaiotês*, demanded by a genuine humanism.

That is the dilemma that faces the humanist. The intuition of free will; free will exercised for a purpose; purpose directed to clothe human life with value; value measured by happiness—the chain is perfect, link by link, only at the end it seems to be attached to nothing. And so I ask myself, reluctantly, almost wishing my answer were mistaken, whether those who advocate humanism, as an isolated movement, are not doomed to disappointment. It is not that the direction in itself is wrong; every step in the progam is right, and only by this path can we escape from the waste land of naturalism. But can we stop here in security? For purpose that will not end in bitter defeat; for values that will not mock us like empty masks, must we not look for a happiness based on something beyond the swaying tides of mortal success and failure? Will not the humanist, unless he adds to his creed the faith and the hope of religion, find himself at the last, despite his protests, dragged back into the camp of the naturalist? If we perish like beasts, shall we not live like beasts? I know that certain adherents of the present movement think they can avoid this fatality —notably Mr. Alan Reynolds Thompson, whose thesis, though concerned primarily with tragedy, may be extended to the whole range of literature:

> . . . The dilemma of modern tragedy remains very real. There is no refuge in obscurantism through return to illusions which science has shattered. Reason denies the objective reality of our dreams; and so long as the honest man accepts a monism which identifies man with nature, he can find no justification for tragic exaltation. The humanist, however, denies the necessity for this identification. Without in the slightest degree disparaging the truth or worth of physical knowledge he maintains that the realm of value has significant validity when taken as distinct from the realm of fact. The realm of value belongs to man; that of fact, to outer nature.

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Following this thesis, Mr. Thompson rejects the doctrine of poetic justice as formulated by Mr. Ludwig Lewisohn: "Serious drama deals with the transgressions of an immutable moral law by a self-originating will. . . . In each instance the destruction of the protagonist reconciles the spectator to a universe in which guilt is punished and justice is upheld". On the contrary Mr. Thompson declares that "the ethical victory of the tragic hero is not a vindication of a moral order in the universe"; rather, the exalted feeling we get from tragedy is due to our "admiration" of a hero "steadfast in his will even to death". That is to say, if I understand the argument: the realm of values connected with a moral order belongs to man not as a fact, but as a dream; and as human beings we must cling to this dream by a desperate act of admiration against the truth of reason which leaves to it no objective reality. Brave words, but so inhumanly difficult. I am troubled by the saying of Pascal that, unless man has the support of the supernatural, he will fall inevitably into stoic pride or Epicurean relaxation. In our modern tongue that is equivalent to pronouncing that the humanist who thinks to stand without religion is desperately beset by forces that would sink him to the level of naturalism. He may cling stubbornly to values that are the creation of his own fancy—for a while; in the end he will be overcome by the brutality of facts.

Now humanism is concerned primarily with the manifestation of life in art and literature, and the question may thus arise as to the kind of religion, granted that some religion is necessary, which would serve as a sound basis for the exercise of the imagination. Well, I think one may say this at least without hesitation, that it must be more than a vague acquiescence in a vaguer conception of something divine and infinite floating far above the world in the vacuous heaven of metaphysics, or oozing out of the world like an opiate vapor to induce the reveries of pantheism. Nor can it be such a possession as may be kept, so to speak, in a compartment by itself, as a precious ornament to be contemplated in idle moments and enjoyed in secret. It must be a militant force that will intermeddle with the whole of life, exacting obedience and arousing enmities. Nor, on the other hand, can it, for the humanist at least, be such a sublimation of the ethical will as would deprive this transient world of significance and demand the total renunciation of mortal ambitions and desires. On the contrary it must come into the heart of man, not without austerity of command, yet with salutary hope, assuring us that our practical sense of right and wrong, of beauty and ugliness, is justified by the eternal canons of truth, and that the consequences of our deeds in this little segment of space may follow the soul in its flight into regions beyond our utmost guessing. It must fortify the purpose of the individual by inspiring him with a conviction that the world in which he plays his part is not a product of chance or determinism, but the work of a foreseeing intelligence, and is itself fulfilled with purpose. It must lend new meaning and larger values to visible phenomena by seeing in them shadows and symbols of invisible realities, and by exhibiting them as servants to a spiritual end. It will so knit the future with the present, so bind together the eternal and the temporal, that the torment of frustration will be assuaged, the sting of transience blunted, and the triumph of the grave overthrown. Only so will happiness be possible here and now as at once the duty and the reward of man. Thus religion was understood by Socrates, in the great age of Grecian achievement, when he consoled his friends in the hour of his apparent defeat: "Wherefore be of good cheer about death, and know of a certainty that no evil can happen to a good man, either in life or after death; he and his are not neglected by the gods". Thus it was proclaimed by a greater than Socrates, again in the hour of apparent defeat, when he comforted his disciples with words that

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might be interpreted as a divine response to the Socratic faith: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world".

It does not follow, if what I have said be true, that the art and literature of a creative era must be exclusively or even predominantly religious in intention, or that every individual artist must be a believer. But I think it would not be difficult to prove from history that wherever great art has flourished, noble in theme as well as in technique, there religion such as I have described it, though the ingredients may vary in proportion and degree and tone, has been present in the background, coloring the thoughts and emotions of society and investing the natural world with a glamour of the supernatural. On the other hand it is equally true that religion, even when favorable in spirit, does not automatically produce a humanistic age, while in some of its manifestations it has been actually antagonistic to art and humane letters. There is need also of a humanism, aroused to its own dignity and ardently concerned with the beautiful representation of life as well as with life itself.

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ELIZABETH MADOX ROBERTS: A PERSONAL NOTE

by Glenway Wescott

My pleasure in her work has never gone stale, and I am still taken by surprise by passages that I remember almost word for word. None of the slight edges of enthusiasm have worn away. Indeed re-reading is more mysteriously exciting than the original spell when it was cast. It may be that the reasons for admiration are never very clear until it has grown systematic, until it begins to cool; it may be merely that I do not know how to urge others to love what I love, not having been altruistic enough to learn. In any case, more than once, wishing to praise Miss Roberts, I have just disappointed myself badly. She has done me the honor to be my friend; and fumbling tiresomely with the pompous or the abstract or the precious words which are all one has to describe writing itself, I imagine that the mystery lies no less in the writer and might thus be touched upon, indirectly.

It is hard with modern reasonableness to characterize a poet, as such! Needless to say I use the word "poet" in the sense which may include a writer of prose and excludes most versifiers. It is hard to find an image which will sufficiently stand for the more glorious extremes of that vocation, as during centuries without much sense of humor it was conceived, as indeed—amid the mere fiction-manufacturers, masters of pastimes and pastiches, worldly observers, hacks, academicians, engendering books out of books alone—it still sparsely goes on being practised. I often think of the oracle, mystery's mouthpiece or human megaphone in Greece, the gaunt stark person on a tripod, drunken: its intellect not quite self-possessed, being possessed of and by something superior to itself; its message varying with thunder-clouds overhead and vapors from far below; with a prima-donna voice, full and serene, over the strident orchestration of confusing facts, expressing itself only because it mistook itself for the whole world, telling the unnoticed truth, solving the old riddle with a fresh one, more moving. Indeed Miss Roberts cannot be said to be gaunt, nor is she intoxicated on anything; she is not inclined to the occult or even Irish. But considering her, an ideal example of what I mean by a poet, certainly does not oblige me to give up my image.

I saw her first years ago. Against the background of a western university, its outlay of large imitated architecture, republican cloisters and Gothic laboratories, with a costly Christmasy jangle of chimes and dogs howling in rich kennels ready for vivisection; the chapels and gymnasiums smelling of juvenile health, the vaults of incunabula of steam-heat, the outdoor air of locomotives and the neighboring slaughter-houses and in season of shining plantations of Dutch flowers; in the least humane of climates, flogged by the wind and cauterized by lightning; in a city famous for crimes, between two of its vainglorious parks, near the oceanic lake the color of doves, having the motion of mad-

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dened or wounded wings of doves, always hinting at suicide to the usual students, hungry for orgy but with monkish pretences and ridden by conceited ambitions (the handsome neurasthenic heirs, the sweating hopefuls of foreign, even heathen, origin, the farmers' sons in flight)—there was the young southern woman, alone absolutely original, unimpressed by the setting of evils and plagiaries, meek and insinuatingly affirmative, untouched by but kindly toward all our half-grown basenesses.

And I saw her a few years later, during the helpless interval between the coming of age and the maturing of the first important work, down one of those wild New York streets scarcely occidental in mood, where the workers go half-naked and negro boys throw balls to pallid boys and girls, and baggy women dispute and prophesy, in a darkened, hot but never warming room, seated with her yellow-crowned head bowed almost between her knees as are figures in certain Blake drawings; now signalling from the window with a towel when she had need of human attendance, now like royalty in a convent drawing apart in an arrogant and pious self-communion; abstractions forming out of the tedium, the shadows of past persons becoming the flesh of future characters—thinking, thinking, remembering, biding her time, uttering extensive dreamy theories and troubling witticisms, with an occasional incorrectness of folk-songs in her speech.

Or later still, when her timidities and her fatigues and her pride had become mere technicalities of living conveniently and extra charms, her thought clear to countless people but her person a riddle still, in a decorous skyscraper suite where society, music, the arts, all were represented as they should be in some slight precious form, she ignored the hour and the date for long periods while she wrote, often more than half of the twenty-four hours at a sitting; then, in a blue-feathered hat, a floating kerchief, ventured forth with a brother or devotee into the common city, finding it as delicately bizarre as if she had invented it also; and about twice a year met critics and practitioners of her art, but in a corner or alcove one at a time, preferring (and with reason) to tire her mind by speaking rather than her heart by listening, with something blue-blooded, almost Russian, in her bearing. For the South is another of those lands of antique gentry brought low.

Again and again of course she returned (and still returns) to Kentucky; I never saw her there. But wherever she was, it evidently underlay the outbranching experience, folded shadowily into the typical scenes of an author's life—an immense territorial ghost. Its past, still animated in her imagination, accompanied the present. One who knew her but had never travelled to Louisville and beyond was always aware of it, as vivid in her talk, her sheperdess's far-sighted gaze, the archaic foldings of her hands, as on the most evocatory pages; in her company one never seemed to be altogether where one was in reality, with that spiritual landscape in the air! And with herself, though always keeping in character, it also underwent impressive changes.

First it was the country of the verses, *Under the Tree*, the plain wonderland of a more normal and realistic Alice. Then suddenly, in *The Time of Man*, the life of Ellen Chesser, it became a grimly and beautifully painted territory, seen with an eye uncivilizedly sharp, over-annotated as in epics, crept over by stubborn vagrant farmers child-bearing to excess, in foul white-trash rags, with the voices of sibyls, of bards—the exalted outcry of a people whom the world welcomes and nourishes indeed very much as it does vermin, starvation's pastoral, squalor's Euripidean play. For *My Heart and My Flesh*, her second novel, the whole place hearkened back to its eighteenth-century dignity; the foliage wove into garlands, fell in folds, over intelligent gardens, and Jeffersonian dwellings sprang up, and hunting hounds and horses to ride appeared, and

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there was string music; all was elegance, but dilapidated, doomed—the grandfather (who reminds me of Stendhal's) when he dies leaves an empty testament, the heiress and her violin sink to the level of the mulatress love-children, she has reasons to reproach herself for having taken part in the emotions of a murder; finally there is not even enough dog-bread for the hounds and in hunger she steals a mouthful of it; but hope steps lightly into the final pages, with classic cattle and a cowherd whose steps come and go over the vaporous lawn around the heroine's bed. It is hard for me to stop writing about this book; it is my favorite; Theodosia Bell is lovelier than Ellen Chesser. In *Jingling in the Wind*, a fantasy, Kentucky stretches out and pretends to be all the states of the Union; the hero, a weather-man, industrializes the sky, and an advertising campaign and a metropolis are made of its dialect, and one of its spiders lectures like a very Spengler; but the last page is an antiphony of a poem by Miss Roberts and an old English ballad, carrying the mind back to the greater beauty of the less brilliant books.

What a place—a locality which is expressive, apt at metamorphosis, as a language is! I feel that no other author will ever have the right to call his place Kentucky. In reality, what after all is it like? In childhood by means of a jig-saw puzzle I memorized its shape on the map, and a banker once offered to have a western friend of mine officially made a colonel. I know how modernization goes in my State, and presume that there too everything now comes down to questions of credit, of the growth of the new manufacturers' feudalism, of what to do with the young between the time their emancipated minds recognize themselves as ripe and the time they can afford to marry, etc. But thanks to Miss Roberts, I persist in confusing Kentucky's genius with hers, in personifying it as a sort of vicarious woman, Greekish with inherited grace and under-nourishment, mediumistic: a sibyl, expressing as if it were quite new what has been the truth all the time, a sibyl or perhaps a mime with an infinitude of masks, so human, willing and able to enact any one of the classic dramas of man, to perform any chapter of the squalid, just a little less than angelic, unfinishable tale.

It occurs to me that I have been representing Miss Roberts's novels as more tragical than they are. In fact they are full of humorous brilliance, to characterize which I should need more wit of my own. You are often at liberty to laugh, but it is not comic relief; the tragedy and the comedy do not alternate but coöperate. At certain moments in most sad narratives the author merely seems to be moping, by temperament, and none too definitely even on his own account; he has grown complacent in his sense of vague predestined prevalent distress. In Miss Roberts's world there is never any doubt about what is wanted, which makes the melancholy wholesome. And cheerful authors, though now that realism is in fashion they rarely altogether suppress what is poor or painful, often smile at it; and to be cynical and so happy indicates another kind of vulgarity of soul.

This strange southern woman never complains, but mourns for the generality; she does not make fun even of herself, but rejoices or is always ready to rejoice with due soberness. She dresses her characters in bodily charms, in oddities, in verbal elegance; she clothes the landscape with flowers and warm weather; and then—freezes to the very twig, strips to the skin, cuts to the bone, and without weakening or any loss of dignity, weeps, weeps, real tears, short clauses that are like tears. Read page 278 of *My Heart and My Flesh*.

I personally look forward to her next book as I do to tomorrow's writing of my own: those always possible sentences which might irrigate with streaming suggestions all the dry anxious intelligence I have in common with so many others, which might be a

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definite answer to the unavailing love and frustrated expectations and disorientated curiosity in and around me, and be also as it were a shedding of certain tears the lack of which burns all eyes as well as my own, and relieve my mistaken crowded heart and perhaps others' by proxy; that unlikely will-o'-the-wisp page or even paragraph which would justify those who, embracing me with their kindness years ago, as it were accidentally lifted me up from the level of mediocre intentions (to be ill at ease and to feel pretentious ever after and to be obliged to work always harder than I wish) to the page to last—! But I anticipate with more confidence her book than my page.

LINES FOR THE LOST

by Lois Montgomery

For us, the lost and literate,
  There is no virtue save in words,
No loveliness immediate.
  The cincture of romance that girds
This magic world is but a dream
  Woven by poets long ago.
From printed pages shines the gleam,
  Not from the sun. The classic woe
That pierces each obedient heart
  At fading rose or fallen leaf
Is hardly an authentic smart
  But only literary grief.
And when, with thin emotions crammed,
  We leave this bookish life we know,
We shall not guess that we are damned
  Till some dead Dante tells us so.

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LEWIS CARROLL

A CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT BY FR-NK H-RR-S

by Hugh Kingsmill

MAN has hardly begun as yet to map out the chart of his own mind. The wisest are brought to pause if you ask them to account for even so common a phenomenon as laughter. Is it rooted in cruelty, as this professor declares, or is it a mere mechanical explosion of arrested energy, as that pundit shall inform you with unsmiling countenance? For the life of me I have never been able to take this kind of speculation seriously. Vauvenargues has an illuminating word. "All great thoughts," he tells us, "come from the heart," and your so-called philosopher is for the most part sadly to seek where the heart, or, indeed, any other vital organ, is in question. In this matter of laughter especially we may without remorse leave Dryasdust to darken obscurity with an array of meaningless polysyllables, and astonish the many by thickening mist to fog.

But there are two or three things which need to be said about humor as at present understood in this twentieth-century England of ours, and, to begin with, what are my own credentials for speaking on this matter at all?

Bernard Shaw, in the preface to his *Dark Lady of the Sonnets*, told the world that I was among the first to rate Wilde's humor at its proper value. True, in the same breath he denies to my own work any trace of that super-excellent ingredient. I am not, however, disposed to quarrel with Shaw on this score. Praise of any kind from a contemporary is so rare that I accept Shaw's tribute with becoming gratitude, while leaving it to him to explain if he can by what process of magic a man is enabled to divine in others a quality not resident in himself. Blake's word is the true one:

> Nor is it possible to thought
> A greater than itself to know.

Shaw, I am very much afraid, has not yet climbed to the Blake level.

But Shaw's tribute is worth quoting, because, when all's said, he remains the outstanding humorist of our day and generation. With this praise of his before me I am at last emboldened to bring to parturition an avowal I've been in travail with ever since I returned to England in the early 'eighties. Outside Shakespeare, most English humor bores me to extinction! True, *Gulliver's Travels* has surpassing merit, and there's an astringent quality in Dryden's best work which acts as a preservative, so to speak, against oblivion. There are flirts of gay fancy, too, in Goldsmith and Sheridan; and Lamb, even, wins us now and again to a pitiful smile with this or that tear-drenched whimsy.

But these masters are already half-forgotten, and for the modern favorites I have nothing but condemnation. Dickens wearies me beyond endurance, his puppets make me yawn! And the Barries, with their Little

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Marys, are even more contemptible. A kneeling subservience to place and position, coupled with a meticulous regard for the properties, is the hall-mark of your typical English humorist. Maupassant is unthinkable in England, and were Heine to show his nose in twentieth-century London, your judges on the bench would promptly clap him into gaol for blasphemy and indecency. And even if he escaped that fate, the best houses would of a surety be closed against him because "the fellow's such an outsider, don't you know".

And while England would mete out this kind of treatment to a Heine, a Lewis Carroll comes to astounding triumph, winning even Royalty to admiring surrender. What is the explanation of this dreadful anomaly? The question is of highest import, for the nation which stones its prophets may cut a big figure for a time, but its final ruin is assured, as England will yet have to learn, unless she repents in season.

It was, I think, in the 'seventies that Lewis Carroll took London by storm with his Alice books! The boom, at any rate, was in full swing when I returned to England in the 'eighties. I paid little attention to the craze at first, for the success of the day and hour has never interested me. But the obsession seemed to increase in virulence with each year, till it became well-nigh impossible to open a paper or hear a politician talk without being plagued by the Walrus, the White Queen, the Jabberwock, and all the rest of the unspeakable company. At last I was compelled to see that Lewis Carroll stood in intimate relation to the common mind of England here at the close of the nineteenth century. What was the clue to the unholy mystery? The books alone could tell me, and I turned perforce to their perusal.

I had already learnt from Hans Andersen that a story ostensibly written for children may embalm in its secret essence the bitter wisdom of maturity. Who that has ever read it can forget the Ugly Duckling, and there is an apologue of a king riding naked through his capital which carries the sting of truth in its tail. But even to mention Andersen in the same breath as Carroll is an insult to the charming Dane. Was there ever, I cried to myself, such meaningless drivel? Until I picked Alice up I had always maintained in and out of season that Theodore Watts-Dunton's *Aylwin* marked the furthest throw of human imbecility. Carroll's Humpty-Dumpties and White Rabbits brought me to wondering doubt, and at last I was fain to admit that Watts-Dunton had more than met his master.

I resolved to purge my mind of Carroll. I would not even think of him again. It is good for no man to take scorn to bed with him and for Carroll I had nothing but impatient-bitter condemnation.

A chance encounter brought me to better wisdom, and a heightened recognition of the folly of all unqualified condemnations. Yet the encounter itself, strangely enough, passed off anything but smoothly. But here's the story and I'll leave it to teach its own lesson.

It was at Lady Jeune's one evening, or was it Lady Shrewsbury? Lady Jeune, surely, but the place doesn't matter. A bevy of beautiful women had clustered round some person, and there was a happy ripple of jest and laughter. Presently the bees began to flutter off in search of other honey. I recognized one of them, a Miss M——, a superb beauty, long-limbed and deep-breasted, a veritable Saxon goddess. I stopped her, I don't know why, and asked her who the lucky man was.

"That's Lewis Carroll," she laughed. "Alice, you know. Such a dear, but absurdly shy."

"I heard laughter," I retorted.

"Oh, that was the Duchess of——. She was teasing the poor man. But why don't you judge him for yourself? He is hardly ever in London. You won't get another chance. Or are you afraid?"

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The blue eyes held me with a mocking challenge.

"Desperately afraid," I answered gravely. "But fear exists to be mastered. Would you introduce me?"

"Surely!" she cried, and a moment later my fair companion had flitted away, leaving me alone with Carroll.

Carroll's outward made me gasp. So this was England's master humorist, this prim cleric, with tight lips and peevish eyes!

"I had no idea you were a parson," I cried. "No wonder your humor is so amiable-innocuous. I begin to understand your success."

He moved irritably and barked out, "I never discuss my writing".

His tone shocked me, but at once came the pricking doubt. Had I failed in courtesy? Had I betrayed my contempt? The thought was intolerable. Could I find the healing word?

"Please forgive me!" I cried. "I had no idea——" It came to me that he was from Oxford, had lived there most of his life, was certain therefore to have met Oscar Wilde, and might have a new view of him. True, Oscar had just gone to prison; his name therefore was taboo in our high-minded society. But Carroll was a clergyman, and at that time I still looked for Christian virtues in the priests of Christ. He was a humorist to boot, or thought himself one. Oscar, I told myself, was the reconciling theme.

"You know Oscar, of course?" I questioned, "and I suppose like the rest of us have yielded to his irresistible seduction."

He knit fretful brows. "Oscar? I don't know whom you mean."

"I mean Oscar Wilde. We who are still his friends speak of him as Oscar, simply."

"I know nothing about him," he squeaked. "I never knew him. I resent, I very much resent . . ."

He sunk into a chair and passed a hand over his brow.

I stared at him blankly. What did it mean, this shrill rage and dismay? I thought of Peter's denial, passionate repudiation bottomed on panic terror. Could that be the explanation? I had no wish to probe the mystery. The man didn't interest me sufficiently. But I was moved by his palpable distress, and cast about for some safer topic. There were features in Oxford's student life which had always shocked me, accustomed as I was to the freedom of American and Continental universities. Carroll's special knowledge might help me to a clear understanding.

"I have been informed," I began, "that the authorities at Oxford keep the students strictly to heel where women are concerned. A barbarous relic, surely, of the purblind medieval sex-attitude. Unwise, too, it seems to me, even from the prudential standpoint. Hot youth will find its way, and I daresay you could furnish me with a score of instances where this don's pretty daughter or that professor's charming wife has taken pity on your manacled youngsters, and come too near the fire to escape with unscorched wings. The temptation to play preceptress to impatient youth cannot but be strong in any case, but the knowledge that desire is being whipped to frenzy by these insensate prohibitions must, I imagine, make the students irresistibly seductive to your woman-kind."

I had already noticed that the room was wretchedly ventilated. Now, to my horror, Carroll, overcome by the close atmosphere, swayed forward in his chair. I caught him instantly, laid him on the floor, and undid his collar. A crowd poured in on us from all quarters. I dispatched one of them for brandy, and in a few minutes I had revived Carroll sufficiently to allow of his being supported from the room by some woman friend or other; a niece, I think, but my notes give me no help on this point. Carroll and I never met again, I don't know why.

Somehow or other this encounter stuck in my mind. Carroll had made a worse than miserable impression on me, yet there was the fact of his success, palpable, in-

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sistent. Why couldn't I solve the riddle? My eyes were as good as most men's surely! I determined to give them one more chance and turned to Alice again.

For a time I was afraid my failure would be even more complete than at the first reading. I could not stomach the drivel at any price. The humor seemed to me inane, futile, and Alice herself utterly unrealized—mere wood! Did Carroll see her as a child, or, as I should have preferred, a girl of thirteen or so, at that age when awkwardness itself is adorable, beginning to take on the entrancing curves of womanhood? Carroll gives the reader no indication. Nor does the book hold any compensating thought. True, he tells us somewhere or other that, "everything's got a moral if only you can find it", but Plato saw the same truth two thousand years ago, and the Athenian wins us to intimate acceptance by virtue of his passionate conviction where the Oxford professor chills with an insipid-meagre *ipse dixit*.

It is perhaps worth noting that Carroll puts this solitary gleam of insight into the mouth of a duchess. No wonder he came to triumph in England!

I was about to put away the book in despair when a phrase caught my eye. I read on and interest quickened. Alice is in the company of the White Knight, and, in spite of the inane word-play, I began to sense in the sketch of the Knight a certain intimate quality as of self-portrayal. The following passage put the matter beyond doubt:

> So saying, he stopped his horse and let the reins fall on its neck; then, slowly beating time with one hand, and with a faint smile lighting up his gentle, foolish face, as if he enjoyed the music of his song, he began.

That "gentle, foolish face" is conclusive. There is a sad sincerity in the phrase which stops the heart with pity.

But the next paragraph is even more revealing. Here are its opening sentences. They deserve a most careful perusal:

> Of all the strange things that Alice saw in her journey through the Looking Glass, this was the one that she always remembered most clearly. Years afterwards she could bring the whole scene back again, as if it had been only yesterday, the mild blue eyes and kindly smile of the Knight. . . .

Here, if anywhere, Carroll paints his very soul. The White Knight is neither more nor less idiotic than any other dreary puppet in the book. There is no conceivable reason why Alice should remember him with any particularity. But Carroll does not, or will not, see this. He has identified himself with the Knight, and is resolved for this once to touch, if only in imagination, a girl's fancy, leave behind a little ache of regret. Was there ever such a confession of impotence and vain longing for love? The pity of it—deeper than tears!

No wonder the English, with their dread of passion, took the poor sexless don to their heart! I understood his triumph at last. He was so safe!

But for the man himself I had henceforth no condemnation, only deepest pity, mingled with remorse at my own previous incomprehension. Blake's word always comes back to me when I think of Carroll:

> And so through all Eternity,
> I forgive you, you forgive me,
> Thus our Blest Redeemer said,
> This the wine, and this the bread.

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THE POST-VICTORIANS

by Francis Hackett

I OPEN a noted English paper, the Sunday *Observer*, to see three full-page advertisements, each with a huge familiar portrait, and each with a great literary name attached. The advertisements are for a big department store in London, and the writers are giving their reasons why they cannot lend themselves to Harrods's publicity. Arnold Bennett declines on the pragmatic ground that the public might misunderstand it and he might lose caste. H. G. Wells declines on the ground that, in this generation, our only paymaster ought to be the reader, and a writer cannot take a fee in private. Bernard Shaw, like H. G. Wells, implies that he is a "prophet", and refuses in somewhat stinging terms to sign his name to puffery.

These are the three great names of our literary epoch. Bennett does not wear the robes of the prophet, like Wells or Shaw, but the three of them are the most eminent of the post-Victorians and anti-Victorians. They are the men who have done most to form the minds of our generation. It was shrewd of Harrods to appeal to them, because beyond them, at the moment, there is no appeal. Ours is not the epoch of Kipling, Galsworthy, Belloc, Chesterton, Barrie. It is not the epoch of Henry James and Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad, who have departed, or of D. H. Lawrence and Aldous Huxley and James Joyce, who are rising; of Yeats and Moore and George Russell; or of Dreiser and Mencken and Sinclair Lewis. The eminences are many, but the central names on the highest eminence are unmistakable, and these are one Irishman and two Englishmen. They have been our leaders and our mentors. To dispute their supremacy would be to open up a discussion, at the very least, as to what one means by "central" and "eminent".

And yet, eminent as they are, they are already merging with the past. The epoch is waning. A new epoch is arriving. To accept them is, in a very definite sense, to declare that they have arrived. We who owe most to them, who have been most formed by them, who have been deepest in subjection to them, are obliged to be candid with ourselves as to the degree in which we are shedding them or trying to shed them. It is, of course, an infidelity, one of those infidelities that give pain and that are implicit in growth. We must repudiate them in order to fulfil our own temperaments. And when we have fulfilled our temperaments and asserted our full personalities, such as they are, we must expect to be disowned by a younger generation, if we even achieve the high distinction of being disowned.

The Victorians were certainly disowned. I was a boy of nine, I well remember, when a bundle of papers came to me in Ireland from my father, containing the tremendous news of Tennyson's funeral in Westminster Abbey. I knew who Tennyson was. I was impressed, as a boy of nine might have been

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impressed a while ago by the ceremonials that attended Thomas Hardy. And yet in 1892, when we in Ireland were still living in the golden aura of Tennyson, he had already been shown to the door by Shaw, Wells, Bennett, Beerbohm, Oscar Wilde and Frank Harris. He was already, so far as they were concerned, wandering like a beggared minstrel after the Victorian Derby Day, a King Lear on Epsom Heath. Ten years later, as I came to the age of indiscretion, I could see that Tennyson was "impossible". I banished him, like my elders, and took to my "modern" heroes. In 1940, I suspect, the young man of nineteen or twenty will be equally far from Thomas Hardy and Joseph Conrad and Anatole France and George Meredith as we were from Browning and Tennyson. It will not be till 1950 that the rising generation will escape from the dominant influences of their epoch and begin to search for the writers of any and every epoch who really suit their temperament.

But that escape which is due in 1950 for the youth of today is no less due today for those who were youths in 1900. We too must throw off our parent-generation. We must detach our allegiances and scrutinize our origins.

My own allegiances, I avow for the purposes of illustrations, were all the stronger because, instead of going to university in the ordinary course of the professional middle class, I went to America to earn my living. My Alma Mater was H. G. Wells and Bernard Shaw. They undertook, deliberately enough, the magnificent task of educating the general public in general ideas. They did for us, who were out in the world, what William James and John Dewey were doing in the American classroom, breaking the cake of custom and ploughing the conventional mind. Shaw has never understood how Shakespeare, who is in every schoolboy's satchel, could have thrown away his pedagogic opportunities. For Shaw is first of all a pedagogue, and those who needed his teaching—the half-educated, let us say, like myself—found him irresistible five-and-twenty years ago. I remember a performance of *Candida*, with Arnold Daly and Dorothy Donnelly, which was given at matinées at a theatre on Sixth Avenue, and so nearly empty that I was able, little daring though I was, to move from the empty fifth row in the balcony to the half-filled second row, without a word from the usher. This was, I suppose, in 1903. I had no pretensions to being a pioneer. It was pure instinct that made me steal my employer's time to attend this unpopular matinée instead of trying to sell still more unpopular book cloth to New York bookbinders. My instinct might have been assuaged had I been educated; but I was hungry-minded and underfed, and I could no more do without the ravishing excitement of *Candida* than a half-grown plant can do without superphosphate or whatever else its feelers are thirsting to bring into its veins.

What made Shaw so pungent, so influential, was the sharp accent of a radical whom Victorianism had dispossessed. Moreover he was Irish. He belonged, as many of his auditors belonged, to a country that had lost its power to retain its intellectuals. We were uprooted, dislocated, quick, critical, impatient and yet nonchalant. We were akin to the Jews, or to many Jews, though seldom so steeped in disillusion, so incisive, so energetic. We packed our convictions in a briefcase. We found it easier to move than to pay the emotional rent. And yet, as time went on, we felt a nostalgia. The quickness that is not thorough, the brightness that is not steady, the readiness that is not constant, became a fever in the head and an ache in the bones. We crave stability. We feel like a stork that has no roof in Denmark or no address in Egypt. We feel like the wandering Jew, and the dangers of this fatigue are evident. For one thing, the man whose spiritual presuppositions are established is an inheritor, he has capital. The

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man who has to acquire his own convictions and preferences is spending energy rather than storing it. It always seems to him, in moments of depletion, that he must acquiesce in a few certitudes or die of nervous exhaustion.

But at the beginning, and in the 'twenties, it was the very fact that Shaw and Wells were completely outside the Victorian tradition, were smiting it at every angle and with every weapon, that made them the men we needed. For an Irishman, at that moment, there could have been more esthetic enthusiasms—George Moore, Oscar Wilde, W. B. Yeats. Oscar Wilde was definitely the most romantic, but his cloak was cut at Oxford and I did not quite recognize the pattern. Yeats was ethereal but too remote. I reviewed him in 1903, in the *World's Work* (my God!) but there was something elusive about the faint, pale Swan of Coole. George Moore was extremely infectious. Moore tripping in his pumps into the asphodel meadow of his style was very different from Shelley coming forward to speak his soul with eyes entranced and lips parted, ankle deep in dew. But George Moore had been in Paris. He wrote like Verlaine today, Zola tomorrow, Sterne the day after. He had the air of an exquisite, of tenderly intriguing with the English language; he had cozening manners and a limpid garrulity and a suggestion of *l'après-midi d'un faune*. Yet, for all the *pâté de foie gras* of his style there was something harsh about him, something hard to comprehend about the virulent assault he made on Hardy and Meredith, something brusque that turned one aside from this Sheraton in blackthorn.

Shaw remained. In spite of myself, in spite of a strong feeling that the brain worked too incessantly, in spite of a desire to have that Niagara of intellectual monologue stop long enough to have one sob heard out of the drama, one revelation of the inarticulate ocean of human experience, one word such as Turgenev or Tolstoy or Dostoievski were reverberating from Russia, the kinship still persisted with his deracinated Irishmen, and it was he, with Wells and Bennett, who held our minds. Pater would sound more distinguished, of course. So would Gérard de Nerval or Barbey d'Aurevilly. They were not so stupendous as the Russians, they were not so searching as Nietzsche or Ibsen. But while I was once informed that if I really believed in Nietzsche (as against Wordsworth), I could not hope to go on working for the Chicago Evening *Post*, the three who caught us when we were young, and kept us cursing and debating till four in the morning, were these nearer and quicker and freer men, to whom we were apprentices.

And who, in those years of immaturity, did more to break the shell than Bernard Shaw? Who was a greater engineer than H. G. Wells, swinging his international bridge across the Atlantic and freighting it with the argosy of another Rousseau? Who adhered so faithfully to so many English proclivities as Arnold Bennett, with his own kingdom within the kingdom of England? These men, as I say, we drank in like thirsty plants. We grew by their vigor. We throve by their warmth. They are part of whatever bone and tissue we have. They were regarded as vulgar, of course, by the genteel of those days. Every kind of sneer and shudder, every superciliousness, every priggishness, was aroused by these pioneers in the breasts of men whom it could only be painful to quote now. It seems fantastic today to think that Shaw and Wells once appeared terrifyingly radical. But remember William James, who was so audacious in 1906 as to say, "I have numbered among my dearest friends persons thus inhibited intellectually, with whom I would gladly have been able to talk freely about certain interests of mine, certain authors, say, as Bernard Shaw, Chesterton, Edward Carpenter, H. G. Wells, but it wouldn't do, it made them too uncomfortable, they wouldn't play, I had to be silent". It is like hearing of people who quailed at

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the mad novelty of grapefruit, or the indecency of the ankle. William James, you can see, felt he was a bit of an anarchist. But it wouldn't do. These were gutter-snipes. These were counter-jumpers. He "*had to be silent*".

When the World War came Shaw was not daunted. He reached instantly for his silver pointer and began to reel off a common-sense explanation. It was not a lack of candor on his part; it was a collision between an event from primitive levels and a highly urban mind. Shaw is a heroic giraffe who has pushed himself out of the mental undergrowth, not raising himself with the gigantic vigor of a Victor Hugo but elongating his neck until he could crop the heads of the tallest trees. But the world of ideas, not the world of convictions, is his habitat. When he arrives at any Rubicon without his bathing suit, you discover in him the pedagogue's native modesty. Mussolini for example, is not a brute fact for him, he is a piquant idea, and Shaw is romantic enough to be enamored of any idea that is piquant, without seeing that this sort of thing is toying with reality.

That is perhaps why his imagination, fired by a generous notion, can carry him to great lengths in the world of ideas, without in the least affecting his notion of what is gentlemanly and honorable in actual behavior. A radical who wishes to be a gentleman is like a lover who wishes to be honorable; he doesn't mean business. And Shaw, at bottom, hasn't meant business. He could thunder about the Denshawai affair as an outrage, but the World War subordinated him as it could not subordinate serious thinkers who could stand isolation like Georg Brandes and Romain Rolland. The reason was basic Irish gentility. Like Oscar Wilde, like George Moore, like Yeats, like all the Irish writers from Sheridan and Goldsmith down to the explosion of James Joyce, Shaw has allowed his vivid social sense to compel him to create a mask, an artificial, superficial personality, so that the writing man and the real man have never tragically merged.

The things that happened to Oscar Wilde were quite as terrible as the things that happened to Dostoievski, but instead of making Wilde a creator they made him a *flâneur*. George Moore has simulated a real relation with himself, but the whole man was never yielded to the man of fashion. Meeting Dostoievski, for example, without letters of introduction, he mistook him for Gaboriau. Yeats has a more complicated, more necessary, one might say more natural, pose. But the one person whom Bernard Shaw never seems to have seen in his nakedness is Bernard Shaw. Wilde and Shaw and Moore and Yeats were, in their own way and at the height of their own genius, not without a certain demnable gentility themselves.

What does this mean? For me it means that they never quite reached the sort of emancipation of personality which allows one to inhabit them without having to open the windows on an outer world. They were all born in the period when their natural perception of the ridiculousness of current religion in Ireland limited for them the mystic sense of their own personalities. The difference between them and Russian men of genius is mainly a difference in religion. Wilde, of course, wrote *De Profundis*. George Moore has pursued religion with the persistence of a bewildered lover who has unaccountably been refused. Yeats has sat, like the boy in green velvet blowing bubbles, a mysterious calabash in his hand. Shaw has been neo-Lamarckian and invented a sort of couch-by-day-and-bed-by-night, three-in-one, patent combination corkscrew-and-toothpick religion which has no alcoholic content and is half the price. But all of these attitudes were inadequate when it came to 1914-1918. They did not measure up to the war. The war brought home a universal tragedy.

To be cheated of tragedy by crystal common sense is a revolting experience. Tolstoy felt it years before when he reproached Shaw. Shaw could report: "I *am* a tragedian at

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heart". But he never bared himself to slings and arrows. And this rules out the tragedy that the war unhappily ruled in.

When you read Baudelaire or the sort of first-rate English critic who has understood Baudelaire, such as Havelock Ellis, you feel that the most tortured sense of abasement has more of the organic matter in it than all these cerebrations to which Shaw was originally driven by the fact that he was born in a country of prigs and puritans, a country that has not yet had the courage to stop either scowling or giggling about anything outside its polite experience. No Irishman that I am acquainted with, certainly not Æ with his fairies, has succeeded in relating himself to the human adventure with complete emotional absorption until the coming of James Joyce. Without this absorption, this ultimate seriousness, the whole thing is from the chin up.

Hence Bennett, plodding though his philistinism is and Manchesterian though his optimism is, can be taken straight to the human heart. If a man accepts himself as he is, he accepts most of the rest of humanity. That is one of the aspects of mysticism. The desperate efforts of intellectual Irishmen not to be like non-intellectual Irishmen are only too intelligible, but their resultant pride, their falsetto wit, their rush away from real life toward the theatre, is the saddest possible outcome of their having been born in the wilderness. The heartrending cries of James Joyce reveal what this isolation has been like far more than Bernard Shaw's firework display. The blackness after Shaw's dazzling is worse than ever, while in even a little of *Ulysses* you first gaze into the horror and stagger into daylight afterwards.

Joyce is sick. He has broken off the shaft of his Catholicism, but the barb is in his flesh. Yet this very sickness has forced him to demand of himself his own meaning, just as sickness has forced D. H. Lawrence into the green caverns of his massy sea. Wells more than Shaw has tried to ask himself his own meaning. But Wells is another of the anti-Victorians who is wholly incapable of seeing himself naked. He periodically takes off his overcoat, his coat, his waistcoat, his shirt. When he reaches his B. V. D.'s, he writes an eloquent volume saying, "*This* time, *this* time, O friends, I have bared myself. This time I have found Christ. I am a bad man in many little ways". Wells's sincerity is comically wrapped up with his solid, utilitarian English philistinism. He plunges into the depths wearing a cork life-preserver.

The anti-Victorians, then, were in the heroic niches without being sufficiently heroic. Out with them. Whom can we, the anti-genteel, set up in their places?

Only those, I believe, who are capable of complete emotional absorption.

This complete emotional absorption is what every writer who has a poet in him is driven to desire. But the more vigorous the intelligence, naturally, the more terrible the struggle. A poet like Shelley rushes with streaming hair into the consoling arms of Death, from the mad disequilibrium of his passionate intelligence. A poet like Yeats hovers like a ghost, his finger on his lips, moved to communicate the secret and yet conscious that his mind has ever been blown like a flame. Only a Dante, a Shakespeare, a Goethe, reaches that supreme deliverance of self which is at once purely detached and vastly conciled. They are the flowers not of themselves but of their age, and if a Yeats has wavered and a Shelley was wild, it is because Ireland has perturbed one poet's mind by its blindness to beauty and England destroyed the other by its hatred of truth.

Yet to return to an olden beauty, to shut one's eyes to the movement around us, is a precarious emotional absorption. The young Americans who first revolted against Wells and Shaw, in the name of beauty, were and are men of anemic intelligence, snoblets who want elegance at any cost. Once the old mold of beauty has been broken, the new struggle is ordained. To wish away the sans-

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culottes, to shudder at seriousness, is to plead for the shattered insouciance of Fragonard and Watteau.

Such inadequacies as I speak of in the anti-Victorians are revealed because of the war upheaval. The whole of recorded human experience, however, is offered to any man who can take it when he deems his contemporaries inadequate. And with this the process known as self-education begins. One goes back. Roughneck as I am, I decide to take over the inheritance that I repudiated. I decide to overcome my repugnance for the culture which bred such venom and pettiness in the opponents of the anti-Victorians. I decide to give my inward spirit to any man who can speak with me in my own language.

I spoke of loyally disowning Tennyson as soon as I came under the influence of the post-Victorians. But just as the young man of today must, before 1950, turn back of his own accord to Thomas Hardy and Anatole France and Joseph Conrad and George Meredith, so I, feeling middle age upon me, feel that I must form my own judgment of Tennyson. Like a curve that undulates, the swelling curve of one's own epoch eventually declines, and the declining curve waxes, carrying forward the intellectual and spiritual design from generation to generation, with rediscovery as much the rule as discovery. The revulsion from each great movement proceeds like something fated and biological. All gods are half-gods, and it becomes one's duty to slay them.

Unless one is obtuse, one does not, however, slay the half-gods to restore forms and objects of worship that immediately demand as a votive offering the love of free experience and fresh experiment.

What is happening in my own experience, then, is conscious and voluntary infidelity. I turn against every pre-war enthusiasm I had. I go back to the Victorians that I snubbed. This time I snub them again, but from my heart, not from a group-loyalty. I espouse Ibsen, but for myself, and find in him things quite other than Shaw found in him. I search for the persons who really suit my temperament, and not my epoch.

The post-Victorians were limited: they were too inclined to judge everything in history in relation to a strong economic faith. The individual is, no doubt, best understood by men who have submitted all their presuppositions to the economist, but the individual is unique. If a Dickens or a Conrad leaves an unfinished novel, no one in the world can possibly finish it. That intangible source of reality, the well-spring of the individual, remains to be accounted for, and the artist alone can account for it by achieving that very emotional absorption which the brain can substitute for but never inspire.

Anatole France was at once an inheritor and a radical. He had the irony to see how, with an imbecile mind, the meaning of life could become evident to a simple heart. If you are a sincere Penguin of any faith, as sincere as W. J. Bryan, and your innocency is native and your ignorance invincible, you are capable of perfect faith and can know the meaning of life. To offer the apple to such Penguins is the work of a serpent.

But we, who are not imbeciles, cannot dispense with the "meaning of life", which is the core of culture. We do not do so by shaking our heads and saying, "It has no meaning. It is all a game. You try it on; and if you get away with it, you get away with it. Risk your neck. Take a chance. But it has no meaning". This nihilism, in which the flapper shakes hands with the tired business man, is not precisely the emancipation from outworn creeds that the post-Victorians were striving for. If this is to be "modern", or to be "sophisticated", it is indistinguishable from old-fashioned vulgarity.

This brings a man like myself back to the golden grille behind which many Christians imagine themselves to have installed the religious spirit.

Many Christians are tender-skinned, mealy-mouthed, self-deceived, blatant, bombastic

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and intolerable. To escape from the suburbs of the mind which are clogged with chapels and churches, meeting-houses and deaneries, rectories and rookeries, is the imperious need of growing intelligence; but the roughnecks cannot leave the spiritual inquest to the Christians. The fire they have stolen is the divine fire.

We are, if you like, vulgar, absurd, pretentious, burlesque and tragi-comic. But out of all this charivari we have imagined ourselves a soul, even if we do not possess one, and this act of imagination, this mysticism, this romanticism, has raised us high above the source from which Machiavelli has examined us, so that he, who loved the truth in its exactitude, has missed the ambient, precisely because his eyesight was so clear. We are monkeys, but extraordinary monkeys. We wrote *The Imitation of Christ*. It was Joan of Arc and not Richelieu or Mazarin who had the supreme influence in French history. It was the divine fool, Rousseau, who opened the gate to the Revolution. It is always the man who touches human imagination who goes further and inspires more deeply than the shrewdest Machiavellian. Christ, who died at thirty-three, who knew no language but Aramaic, has been worshipped as a god by untold millions not because they are base, but because he was a hero, and because his career is as perfect as the "Ode to a Skylark". That sort of thing, which Machiavelli leaves out, is practical politics. And in saying that "politics are simply non-moral", for example, the clever pragmatist is not fair to the human monkey or the human monkey's thirst for the absolute. Politics are human. That is the dirtiest thing you can say about them. But when, with our eyes on the conspiracy against truth which is usually called Good Taste, we have laughed our laugh with the Rev. Father Rabelias, when we have exposed the conspirators who hang tinsel on human instincts, let us not deceive ourselves about the supreme realities of which the genteel make so horrible a pantomime. Let us not give up the Hound of Heaven simply because he is a hound.

Why do I object to cruelty? Why do I hate tyranny? Why do I prefer not to lie? It has little to do with Christ, who simply had these same antique preferences in a heroic form. If Christ had never been born, the world would be poorer but not insolvent. We should cling to Buddha. And we should hate cruelty, tyranny and lying because these habits, like stupidity, sensuality and selfishness, prevent our knowing ourselves as congruous men. That is all. The illusion of knowing oneself is the only tolerable illusion for a man with a fine nervous organism. To be unable to do so, or unwilling to do so, is to be debarred from cultivating one's spirit. And literature is only a means to that larger experience.

The genteel, as I see them, are not free-thinkers. "Free-thinkers," Tolstoy said, "are those who are willing to use their minds without prejudice and without fearing to understand things that clash with their own customs, privileges, or beliefs. This state of mind is not common but is essential to right thinking; where it is absent discussion is apt to become worse than useless. A man may be a Catholic, a Frenchman, or a capitalist, and yet be a free-thinker; but if he puts his Catholicism, his patriotism or his interest above his reason and will not give the latter free play where those subjects are touched, he is not a free-thinker. His mind is in bondage."

The World War showed how all our minds were in bondage. But the hardest test for the roughnecks, who are the free-thinkers, is the test of exposing their own most serious personal convictions. We cannot claim that there are "values" unless we are more than monkeys. We cannot make a cockshy of gentility unless we take over the onus of a tragic sense of life ourselves. This is the only road to the great inheritance, the inheritance from which the genteel, whose minds are in bondage, must be dispossessed.

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MAGIC AND FANTASY IN FICTION

by G. K. Chesterton

It may seem but a mild form of dalliance to trifle with the word Magic as a term of criticism, when it has recently been so useful to the clergy as a term of abuse. A worthy Bishop of the Church of England has shown all the ancient activity of a witch-smeller, in pursuing those suspected of believing it, as the witch-smellers pursued those suspected of practising it. He does this, I understand, to show that he is a Liberal Churchman. I have no intention of discussing such matters here; but it does happen that this use of the term, considered as a text, throws some light on the first facts of its relation to literature, and especially to legend. The ecclesiastic in question always uses it as covering all the rather wide field of religious doctrines in which he does not happen to believe. But in this we have at the start the neglect of an important and rather interesting distinction. The word Magic was widely used as a term of abuse, because it was really a question of abuse in more senses than one. Magic was the abuse of preternatural powers by lower agents whose work was preternatural but not supernatural. It was founded on the profound maxim of *diabolus simius Dei*; the devil is the ape of God. Magic was a monkey-trick of imitation of the divine functions; and there was therefore nothing strange in either the similarity or the dissimilarity. But to talk of the higher mysteries or miracles as forms of magic, or as coming forth from magic, is to reverse the whole story. It is as if we were to say that the Black Mass gradually evolved into the Mass. It is like saying that an abbot establishing the rule of St. Benedict was a parody of the Abbot of Misrule. It is like saying that the disciples who said the Lord's Prayer had borrowed it from the witches who said it backwards.

But in all that mythology and popular poetry out of which our written literature sprang, this distinction is dimly felt long before it was clarified by Christianity. There is always the sense of one sort of magic which is an enemy and an enslaver. We all know that there are jokes of philology, or examples in which a word has been turned upside down and come to mean the contrary of itself. The learned will readily grow gay over the history of the word "buxom", or the word "nervous". There is almost as comic a contradiction in our use of the word "enchantment" when we say "I was enchanted to meet Mr. Miggs", or "The view of Brixton from the station is simply enchanting". But in the vast unwritten literature of mankind enchantment was almost always regarded as a curse. There is in enchantment almost always an idea of captivity. Sometimes the stricken victim is literally struck motionless, as when men are turned to stone by the Gorgon or the prince in the Arabian Tale is clamped to the earth in marble. Quite as often the victim of enchantment wanders through the woods as a white hind or flies

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From "Fairy Tales from the Arabian Nights". (Putnam.)

with apparent freedom as a parrot or a wild swan. But he always talks of his very freedom as a wandering imprisonment. And the reason is that there is always in such witchcraft the note of travesty; the man is disguised and in a double sense "guyed"; as when the youth in Apuleius feels literally that the witches have made an ass of him. In contrast with this, it will be noted that the good miracles, the acts of the saints and heroes, are always acts of restoration. They give the victim back his personality; and it is a normal and not a supernormal personality. The miracle gives back his legs to the lame man; but it does not turn him into a large centipede. It gives eyes to the blind; but only a regular and respectable number of eyes. The paralytic is told to stretch forth his hand, which is the gesture of liberation from fetters; but not to spread himself as a sort of Briarean octopus radiating in all directions and losing the human form. There runs through the whole tradition the idea that black magic is that which blots out or disguises the true form of a thing; while white magic, in the good sense, restores it to its own form and not another. St. Nicholas brings three children alive out of a pot when they have already been boiled down into soup; which may be said to mark the extreme assertion of form against formlessness. But Medea, being a witch, puts an old man into a pot and promises to bring out a young man; that is, another man. Also Medea, being a witch, does not keep her word.

This division even in the deep roots of legend and primitive literature would help critics very much in judging the real principles of uncanny or fantastic fiction. There is no reason within reason why literature should not describe the demonic as well as the divine aspect of mystery or myth. What is really remarkable is that in modern fiction, in an age accused of frivolity, in an age perhaps only too headlong in its pursuit of happiness, or at least of hedonism, the only popular sort of fantasy is the unhappy fantasy. There is a certain amount of fantasy that is avowedly fantastic, in the sense of unreal; mostly in the form of fairy tales ostensibly written for children. But, on the whole, when the serious modern novel has dealt with the serious preternatural agency, it has not only been serious but sad. This contrast appears first and most vividly in the comfortable and even convivial Victorian novelists. They often thought it enough to make their human characters comfortable; but if they did suggest any superhuman characters, they were generally uncomfortable as well as uncanny. These humanitarians of the nineteenth century were haunted by no spirits, except a few thin ghosts; but these were the lost spirits of Calvinists of the seventeenth century. In their philosophies, the humanitarians believed in heaven but not in hell. In their novels, they believed in hell but not in heaven. Dickens did indeed attempt in *A Christmas Carol* to make a positive polytheism of three versions of Father Christmas;

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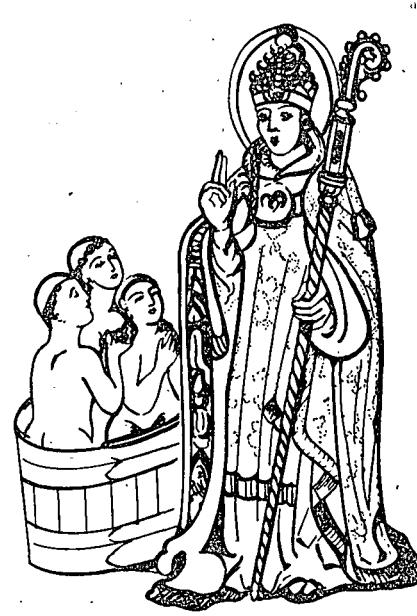
a curious temporal Trinity. But the warmest Dickensian (and I hope I am one of the warmest) will admit that these solid guides are far less convincing than the visions that they reveal. They have not that purely poetic reality that does belong to the hints of horror and the glimpses of nightmare in the novels of Dickens. The man with the waxen face, in one of his short stories, is by every definition a ghost; but he is a ghost in whom we can believe, as compared with these gods in whom we cannot believe. It was even more marked in Wilkie Collins, who had less sense of the serious need of spiritual things. He could indulge himself in dubious superstition; he would have thought it superstitious to indulge in the symbols of positive religion. The whole point of *Armadale* is a family curse as frankly psychic as a family ghost. But we should be much disconcerted, in wandering through a Wilkie Collins story, to meet an angel with wings and a halo when we were looking for a gentleman with whiskers and a high hat.

In short, in so far as humanity became once more heathen, it believed more and more in the old dehumanizing spell, the freezing of the will by trance or terror, and less in the other legend of the hero or the helper who can break the spell. There has lately been a return to the more heartening heroic legend; but that is exactly in so far as there has been a reaction against the merely heathen spirit. A story like *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* is strictly supernatural and not merely preternatural. But even here the habit of the nineteenth century persists into the twentieth, especially in the instinctive selection of form. No man has done more to bring back a breath of happiness into fantasy than Mr. Walter de la Mare. He has testified that even when we do look through magic casements it is not absolutely necessary that the faerie lands should be forlorn. But, by something almost like a sense of delicacy, he has generally brought his good news in the form of rhymes; and, in a sense, merely of nursery rhymes. It gives a note, not exactly of irresponsibility, but of a certain shyness and appeal to innocence. But when it is a matter of more massive treatment, even he inherits something of the now established "modern" spirit, which can deal most decisively with the darker experience. And few things that he, or indeed anybody else, has written have so much of what can really be called realism as the diabolism of "Seaton's Aunt".

It is perhaps a symbol that Henry James called one of his books *The Two Magics*; but entirely forgot to mention any magic except one. For in the other case the word is a mere metaphor, used of some trick or tact; and the only tale that is really about magic is about black magic. It was a horrible and powerful story about two children practically possessed of devils. I wish somebody with the genius of James could really write a book on the two magics; and say something in the other of the gesture that can cast out devils. As it is, even the most sensitive and spiritual modern fiction leaves us rather with the Swinburnian impression that "even



S. NICHOLAS
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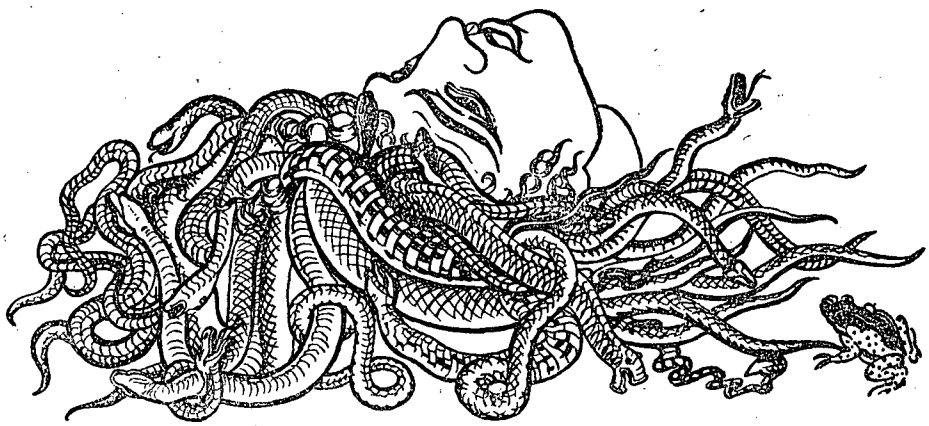
He who cast seven devils out of Magdalene" could scarcely do the same for Seaton's Aunt. I am well aware that there has been an interlude of a rather different sort of magic, which professed for a time to be neither black nor white. If I call it colorless magic, I do not mean it in contempt; but rather as crystals are colorless, or diamonds or clear water. It came with what was called the Celtic School, when Victorian ethics, always rather exhausting, were rather exhausted. In that reaction it was rational enough for Mr. W. B. Yeats to bid us "Come clear of the nets of wrong and of right"; and so ignore even the two kinds of positive magic, the net of St. Peter and the snare of Satan. But I, who have an inexhaustible admiration for everything that Mr. Yeats says and writes, may be allowed to testify that any attempt to live entirely in the crystal of colorless magic ends in the very convincing exclamation of the elf in his own play—"I am tired of winds and waters and pale lights". So were we; and so eventually was Mr. Yeats; for his powerful mind seems to have turned more and more of late to structural visions of the whole course of history and humanity; social and rather sweeping statements, like intellectual cyclones, which must nevertheless in their nature be not only mystical but moral. And though I do not care very much myself for the cabalistic games and cryptograms that seem to amuse him at present, they have a certain mathematical solidity like Babylonian bricks. It is a good thing in that sense to be a Cubist, when winds and waters have tempted you too much to be a Curvist. But in any case I am convinced that every deep or delicate treatment of the magical theme, from the lightest jingle of *Peacock Pie*, which may seem as nonsensical as Lear, to the most profound shaking of the phenomenal world, as in some of the best stories of Algernon Blackwood, will always be found to imply an indirect relation to the ancient blessing and cursing and it is almost as vital that it should be moral as that it should not be moralizing. Magic for Magic's sake, like art for art's sake, is found in fact to be too shallow, and to be unable to live without drawing upon things deeper than itself. To say that all real art is in black and white is but another way of saying that it is in light and darkness; and there is no fantasy so irresponsible as really to escape from the alternative.



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THE SAME FALLACY OF HUMANISM

A REPLY TO MR. ROBERT SHAFER

by Allen Tate

The editor of this journal has generously allowed me space in which to reply to an essay by Mr. Robert Shafer entitled "Humanism and Impudence", which appeared in The Bookman for January, 1930. Mr. Shafer's essay was a criticism of a paper of mine, "The Fallacy of Humanism", in which I analyzed some of the mental habits, and certain metaphysical assumptions, of the leading Humanists—More, Babbitt, and Foerster—and attempted to point out the logical consequences of their position.* Mr. Shafer's defence of the Humanists is long and studied, and I can scarcely hope to compete with its ingenuity in this brief reply.

Mr. Shafer misunderstands the main argument of my essay; he does not, apparently, even misunderstand it; he either does not see it or will not allow it to exist. His refutation therefore employs a device time-honored among expert debaters. He recognizes the argument only in its detail, and by refusing to see the evidence as a whole and the object for which it is offered, and even by presenting me with conclusions that I had no intention of reaching—conclusions not implied by the evidence—he easily reduces the whole essay to absurdity. His formula is about as follows: There are five oranges on the table—but such evidence is absurd in a proof that it snows in July. Mr. Shafer does not mention the fact that the modest induction is only meant to show that oranges are yellow. I will ask the reader to bear this formula in mind.

Since the subject of my essay, ignored by its critic, was the relation of Humanism to the idea of authority, I will enlarge only upon two instances of his misunderstanding of my chief argument; for they are crucial. Beyond this, disputed points of detail must be left to the curiosity of the reader, who may refer to my essay and to Mr. Shafer's reply. It is my desire to reëstablish here only the true issue of the controversy, an issue that is now all but totally obscured.

I

Mr. Shafer misstates my religious position, and to do so he asserts that I attack Humanism "in the name of religion", and that I "profess to speak as a Christian". He says specifically: "Indeed, he seeks quite plainly to imply that he speaks from the haven of Catholicism (Roman or other)". What I actually said was this:

> It must be understood that this essay urges the claim of no particular Western church, and it is in no sense a confession of faith; but the connection between the Reformation and Naturalism, and what I conceive authority to be, define the position that the Humanists must occupy if they wish to escape intellectual suicide.

The intention of this passage is clear enough; it should have been even clearer in the light

* *The Criterion*, July, 1929; *The Hound & Horn*, January, 1930.

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of a previous statement—a statement at the beginning of my essay laying down the problem to be discussed throughout:

> . . . If Humanism shall save itself—that is to say, if it shall find a method—what is the position into which it will be logically driven?

This asks the question, and the preceding quotation summarizes the detailed answer to it that I give in my essay. This answer, which simply proposes a logical conclusion to the Humanist position, is for Mr. Shafer a profession of Christianity on my part. Now, by omitting the explicit purpose of the evidence, and by setting up a fictitious one, by creating fictitious evidence as well, Mr. Shafer not only asks the reader to believe that I displayed five oranges as proof that it snows in July; he asks him to believe that I, supposing oranges to be proof of midsummer snow, blundered into thinking that *crêpe de chine* would serve the proof just as well. It is a little complicated, but far simpler than the disarming simplicity at this stage of Mr. Shafer's reply.

This, however, is only preliminary, for his purpose in presenting me with Christianity goes deeper. If, he seems to have reasoned, it can be shown that I profess Christianity and at the same time deny the need of a specific religious doctrine, my argument that the Humanists should have such a doctrine will fall to the ground. We have seen Mr. Shafer's evidence of my professed Christianity. Here are his words proving that I deny the necessity for a specific religion:

> *In setting forth the nature of religion*, it will be recalled, he asserted doctrinal differences to be unimportant or negligible, because religion is really a "technique" . . . (italics mine)

By means of this passage, Mr. Shafer argues that my idea of religion is that of "religion-in-general"—a phrase that does not, of course, appear in my essay but which, in Mr. Shafer's text, appears to have done so, since it is there dressed in inverted commas. By pretending that my discussion of "doctrinal differences" sets forth the nature of religion, he subtly falsifies my use of the word *technique*, which in my essay is interchangeable with *method* in the larger sense of instinctive use of the resources of a specific culture: in denying that the Humanists have a technique I denied that they had a definite and living religious background, in virtue of which their values (doctrines) can be made good. But Mr. Shafer, having distorted my meaning, proceeds to the assertion that my conception of religion is that of the politician and the sociologist, who value it as an instrument of social control. Here is the passage that he describes as an exposition of the "nature of religion"—I quote it without necessarily believing that his failure to understand it largely proves the justness of the distinction it sets forth:

> . . . this defect of the Humanists [a discrepancy between doctrine and method] is a central one, and . . . critically examined, it will turn out to be the philosophical malady of the so-called naturalist. Doctrinal differences in themselves may be negligible; the man who supposes himself to be a naturalist may practice the Humanistic virtues (Montaigne); the Humanist in doctrine may exhibit the method of naturalism (More). But if the appearance of mere doctrine is deceptive, the operation of a technique cannot be. The Humanists have no technique. How, under the special complexities and distractions of the modern world, they intend to validate their values they do not say; they simply urge them.

Upon this passage and upon the passage describing the position that Humanism should logically occupy, Mr. Shafer bases his assertions, (1) that I profess Christianity; (2) that my Christianity is "religion-in-general"; (3) that doctrinal differences in my idea of religion are unimportant, religion being social control, any kind of which will do; and (4) that, finally, I contradict my thesis that the Humanists need a specific religious background.

Now it is not only obvious that the words

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question do not set forth the "nature of religion"; it is equally obvious what they do set forth. They argue a distinction between an abstract doctrine, on the one hand, purporting to have a sufficient motivation, externally and in itself, to induce in the mind its functional equivalent, and, on the other hand, a specific habit of mind operating functionally—a habit of mind which, at the level of self-consciousness, may or may not tend towards an abstract description of its own procedure. The decisively important thing is the ingrained habit of mind. My contention throughout was that the Humanists hold to an abstract doctrine that is merely abstract, and that its literal meaning becomes negligible (Mr. More's judgments become "meaningless") by virtue of their external and mechanical application of it. I argued that this mechanical method of applying a doctrine is more significant than the doctrine itself; the method, actually betrayed by their specific judgments, by their ingrained habits of mind, is naturalistic, and metaphysically opposed to the external doctrine. The implication of this argument was: the only condition under which the Humanistic values (doctrines) can be realized is an actual center of life religiously and morally consistent with them. Until this center is found, and not eclectically pieced together at the surface, Humanism is an attempt to do mechanically —that is, naturalistically—what should be done morally.*

Mr. Shafer includes in his article an able summary of Humanist doctrine, from which he goes on to say: "This, then, is the critical movement which Mr. Tate attacks violently in the name of religion." I have already dealt with my use of "the name of religion". Now I should like to make it clear that I do not attack and have never attacked the Humanist doctrines as such.* For the Humanists are telling us, in substance, that they believe in turning water into wine—a belief that I share with them. The question remains, however, how is it to be done? It cannot be done by merely scolding the ubiquitous water for not turning red, nor mechanically by the ordinary scientific methods. Before we can realize the belief, we have got to make a world, or bring back one, whose conditions of being make it possible.

* Cf. "The Fallacy of Humanism", *The Hound & Horn,* January, 1930, p. 241: "The sole defence of eclecticism is naturalistic—that is to say, it rests upon the ability of the individual mind mechanically to combine, upon a *tabula rasa,* a variety of unlike elements into a unity".

II

Mr. Shafer's second misinterpretation of the argument directly concerns the subject of my essay—Humanism and authority. He says:

> Mr. Tate says that Mr. P. E. More is a Platonist. But, he asks, what is a Platonist? He is, we are told, either one "who believes what Plato believed", or one "who uses the Socratic method for the exposure of contradiction". And, since Mr. More obviously believes things that Plato did not, he is, if he be a Platonist at all, one by virtue of his use of the Socratic method", which "is a method only, and . . . may be used by the Humanist and his enemy alike". Thus swiftly is Mr. More's Platonism disposed of; a transparently false dilemma is set up, which would suffice to discredit every student of Plato from his day to ours, and the desired conclusion is at once reached, with no troublesome discussion or resort to the evidence.

Indeed, a transparently false dilemma *is* set up; but—without wishing in the least to be rude to Mr. Shafer—I must affirm that he is mistaken, that the dilemma, as he represents it, was not set up in my text. It was far from my intention to argue the ludicrous proposition that Mr. More is not, in any ordi-

* See the opening sentence of my essay: "If the necessity for virtue could tell us what it is and ensure its practice, the doctrine of the American Humanists would stand with the minimum of easy, even perfunctory revision." ("The Fallacy of Humanism", *The Hound & Horn,* January, 1930, p. 234.) It is perfectly clear that I did not question the Humanist doctrines as such; I questioned the possibility of their effectiveness in view of an external and abstract method.

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nary sense, a Platonist; there is proof that I had no intention of using five oranges as evidence of snow in July. I was discussing the validity of Plato as *authority* in Mr. More's judgment. I said:

> But owing to the distracting influence of the other authorities—Christ, the Forest Philosophers—which compose his independent faith, it is difficult to ascertain just how authoritative, at a given moment, Plato is.

And in the same connection:

> Why does he use it [the Socratic method]? There is only one answer: for the support of independent faith.

My purpose, explicitly set forth in these two quotations, and ignored by Mr. Shafer, was to show that Plato is only one of the various sources of Mr. More's "authority"; and my conclusion was to the effect that one must take Plato's authority on the authority of Mr. More—Plato not having had anything like the position of official spokesman for any branch of Western Christianity in about six hundred years. Moreover, the special sources of Mr. More's authority are not fused into any institution existing now or ever; and thus his religion, being the product of his own enquiry and speculation, is strictly an "independent faith". Its various elements are, from the viewpoint of authority, personally and thus irresponsibly* combined in Mr. More's thought; and I therefore said: "The re authority at all times, of course, is Mr. More"

Now Mr. Shafer justly calls the five volumes of *The Greek Tradition* an "original and profound work"; yet does its originality and profundity bear upon the question of religious authority—the sole question that I put to Mr. More's religious writings? However, Mr. Shafer indirectly attempts to answer this very question; he says: "*The Christ of the New Testament* [contains] an exact and unmistakable explanation of his author's acceptance of the historic Christian revelation". I have read this explanation in addition to the rest of Mr. More's religious writings; what Mr. Shafer means by "acceptance" is not clear, for Mr. More's Christianity excludes belief in the Miracles and the Virgin Birth. (So does my Christianity; but I do not lean upon religious authority for my judgments.) There is a detailed analysis yet to be made of Mr. More's religious books; still I think that my conclusion will be found to be correct: the historic revelation that Mr. More has accepted is largely one of his own contrivance. It is revelation on Mr. More's own terms—revelation as revealed by Mr. More. It is a reconstruction of the historical elements in a pattern satisfactory to the needs of Mr. More's "independent faith", the authority for which is to be found solely in the books of Mr. More. Because of the discrepancy between the individualism of his religion and the dogmatism of his judgment, I said that his statements about religion "tend to be vague".

But I interrupted Mr. Shafer; from his assertion that I avoided "troublesome discussion" and "resort to the evidence", he was about to advance four specific charges of evasion in those respects:

(1) Mr. Tate knows that there is direct evidence;

This is not subject to philosophical discussion.

(2) he refers inaccurately to his author's *Studies of Religious Dualism*.

*Mr. Shafer ("Humanism and Impudence", *The Bookman*, January, 1930) seriously misrepresents me on this question; he says: "He [Tate] says of them [the Humanists] . . . that another is morally irresponsible . . ." Without the qualification to this idea that I carefully set forth, this statement by Mr. Shafer is misleading; it makes me say that Mr. More is morally irresponsible in the ordinary meaning of the phrase. I not only repudiate the intention of saying this; I repudiate any interpretation to this effect. What I said follows: "The belief in the authority of Plato when More is the actual authority explains the poor quality of his literary judgments. Moral judgments are never more irresponsible than when the judge deludes himself into thinking that the high and mighty of the past are behind him. Mr. More is a man whose moral habits are not subject to the purification and correction of a specific external authority, and the delusion that they are only increases their irresponsibility. In the name of restraint he is able to evoke the limit of his personal distastes". This is doubtless hard criticism, but it is in no sense a personal attack. It is adequately interpreted by the text above.

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n my text the title of this book appears as *Studies* in *Religious Dualism*; the inaccuracy is thus a typographical error substituting *in* for *of*.

(4) and he says that Mr. More has written a book on "quotations and analogies" from Plato. This denotes, presumably, *Platonism* . . .

What I really said was this:

And yet he [More] constantly draws upon Plato for quotations and analogies (he has written a book on the subject); he has the air of delivering his opinions from quoted authority.

The phrase "book on the subject" does denote *Platonism*, and in my sentence the phrase obviously refers to "Plato"; but Mr. Shafer, devising a tortuous quibble, pretends that it refers to "quotations and analogies", in order to convince the reader that I am not acquainted with Mr. More's book.

This charge is the most interesting, and I put it last:

(3) and misuses a quotation from it [*Studies of Religious Dualism*].

In my essay, I say: "About twenty years ago he [More] took to task an interpreter of the Forest Philosophers for trying *to convert into hard intellectualism what was at bottom a religious and thoroughly human experience*". The words in italics are the misused quotation. I employed it as an index to the quality of Mr. More's relaxed views on religion—the kind of views one often expresses when one is not writing technically and theoretically; when one is, in short, spontaneous. This relaxed view betrays the fact that Mr. More's religious center is *feeling* and *man*, not *dogma* and the *supernatural*; that, therefore, this center is "naturalistic". The quotation was used not at its face value and approvingly; so it was misused.

In fairness to Mr. Shafer the four charges should be reproduced together, as he wrote them:

Mr. Tate knows that there is direct evidence; he refers inaccurately to his author's *Studies of Religious Dualism*, and misuses a quotation from it, and he says that Mr. More has written a book on "quotations and analogies" from Plato. This denotes, presumably, Platonism . . .

To numerous other criticisms of a like character I beg, because my space is limited, to be excused from replying.

III

For this essay is too long. And I cannot take the space for a detailed reply to Mr. Shafer's defence of Mr. Norman Foerster. I said, in general, of Professor Foerster, that he had tried to derive a philosophical system from mere literature; that this system was muddled, incoherent, and self-contradictory. Mr. Shafer denies that Professor Foerster intended to set forth a systematic doctrine of Humanism; perhaps it was not his intention; in fact, he did. Mr. Shafer's best defence of Professor Foerster's innocent intentions in the last chapter of *American Criticism* is his description of the method of the two leading Humanists:

Its [the critical method's] concreteness has an incalculable advantage [over the abstract and dialectical method]; and this has enabled it to avoid a sterile formalism and the appearance of precision in a field where that appearance is invariably a ruinous delusion.

This is obviously not true of Professor Foerster's Humanist program.* And is it true of Mr. More and Professor Babbitt? If it is, there is no quarrel with the leading Humanists, and my essay lacked a real object.

* It *is* true that Professor Foerster nowhere describes his Humanism as being more than a "critical method" or a "program" or a "working philosophy"; and yet as a working philosophy that attains to the *appearance* of "precision" in internal coherence, it should be fully clarified. Is Professor Foerster willing to "work" on the basis of a philosophy that he has not completely thought out? If so, what becomes of the Humanist thesis that the romantics proceed with unconscious assumptions? Mr. Shafer says that Mr. Foerster's exposition of Humanism is solely his own, and it is in no sense a program for other Humanists. Mr. Foerster evidently thinks differently; for, counting at random, I find eight sentences beginning "Humanism" instead of "I". (For the points discussed in this note, see *American Criticism*, Chapter V, pp. 223-261.)

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Do they avoid an appearance of "precision", and if they do, should they, in order to reap the benefits of the critical method? The truth seems to be that Mr. Shafer is defending them with an equivocal word: does *precision* mean accuracy and subtlety of judgment, or does it mean the systematic application of an explicit body of doctrine to the given field of enquiry? In the latter case, the doctrine may be ever so precise in its own terms, and the particular judgments ever so muddled and irrelevant to the subject. It almost appears as if Mr. Shafer unconsciously shied away from terms like "system" and "a priori judgments", and obscured a latent distinction with the word "precision" instead.

For any careful reader of Professor Babbitt's three principal books—*The New Laokoön, Rousseau and Romanticism,* and *Democracy and Leadership*—and any persistent follower of Mr. More's dashing excursions into mere literature will detect a disjunction between the doctrine and the insight into the subject. There is, in these critics, an imprecision of particular judgment, a certain obtuseness due to emotional distance from the subject-matter (any subject-matter), and, over against this, there is a very definite and almost machine-like system of ideas knocking down everything before it.

The Humanists are, in short, precise where they should be vague, and vague where they should be precise. And this is a reversal of the method attributed to them by Mr. Shafer. We are made to feel that there is a hard system of abstract ideas, distinct from disciplined sensibility,* from personal perception, from any concrete way of life.

This is the center of my essay on the Humanists, and I feel that, if it was worth attacking, its central idea should have been taken into account. For, as M. Ramón Fernandez has recently said, in a brilliant essay on Humanism,† Humanism should not pretend to be a "body of Doctrine"; it is "a resultant situation". This is brilliant analysis.

The American Humanists have tried to make the resultant situation its own background, because they lack the resultant situation itself. Humanism is too ambitious, with insufficient preparation. (I do not mean erudition.) It tries to take a short-cut to the resultant situation, and ignores the social difficulty of making or reconstructing an appropriate background; it ignores the philosophical difficulty of imagining what the background should be; it is an effort to imitate by rote the natural product of culture; it is a mechanical formula for the recovery of civilization. It is the cart before the horse, and because it gets the "philosophy" in the wrong place, it invites philosophical attack. Humanism should be culture, but it may be a little untamed in the Humanists until, as the digging of graves in the grave-diggers, "custom hath made it in them a property of easiness".

* See Mr. More's essay on Vaughan (*The Demon of the Absolute*), where only the sentimentality and the *natural feeling* of the poet make him of critical value to Mr. More. See also Professor Babbitt's discussion of "The Ancient Mariner" for similar faults of perception ("Coleridge and the Moderns", *The Bookman*, October, 1929).

† *The Criterion*, January, 1930.

Mr. Shafer's rejoinder will be found on the next page.

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IN WANDERING MAZES LOST

A FINAL NOTE

by Robert Shafer

I SHALL not long detain the reader who has made his way through Mr. Tate's excuses for his "Fallacy of Humanism". I am quite content to stand by my former criticism, which was carried through in good faith, and which was "studied" only in the sense that I did try carefully to determine the actual basis of Mr. Tate's confident disposal of humanism. The attempt brought out certain facts and conclusions which no amount of patter about oranges and *crêpe de chine* can appreciably disturb.

Mr. Tate naturally does what he can; and he is welcome to his yellow oranges. It is impossible, however, to allow several of his remarks, in defence of his "modest inductions", to pass without comment. And first as to Mr. P. E. More's Platonism: I fully agree that the instances I cited of inaccurate reference and slipshod writing were, in themselves, trivial. I mentioned them incidentally merely because they did not stand alone. Mr. Tate now exhibits them in naked isolation, very properly points out their intrinsic unimportance, and passes to a specious conclusion. He "begs to be excused from replying to numerous other criticisms of a like character". Of a like character! In one sense, he is quite right; I did bring forward other instances of inaccurate reference or statement, as readers of my essay will recall; but these other instances were without exception, I believe, of great intrinsic importance. They were indisputable, and they all went together to raise the gravest of questions concerning Mr. Tate's critical methods. Under these circumstances, one wonders what possible satisfaction he can derive from his attempt to vindicate his critical procedure. Whatever the answer, certainly nobody else will be satisfied.

But readers may pardonably be misled by Mr. Tate's accompanying assertion that he was charged with "misusing" a quotation from Mr. More's *Studies of Religious Dualism* merely because it "was used not at its face value and approvingly". In fact, the point is very different. Mr. Tate says frankly enough that his search was for a passage where he might find Mr. More "off his guard".* Thus he might obtain something to use against him. He admits that the search was difficult. To achieve his end he had to discount and disregard his author's deliberate utterances expounding his "idea of religion", and had finally to quote an incidental remark published more than twenty years ago. I thought this a queer proceeding. I still think so. And I complained that the quotation was "misused" not only on this account, but also because, when at length discovered and brought forth, it could not legitimately be forced to yield the meaning required for Mr. Tate's purpose. People who argue, not primarily for victory, but for true enlightenment, I believe it would be agreed, usually do not thus go to work.

* *Hound & Horn*, Winter 1930, p. 25, l.3.

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Nor, I think, do they reprimand others for not having understood what never was said. Mr. Tate now accuses me of inventing the dilemma with which he confronted Mr. More and asserts: "It was far from my intention to argue the ludicrous proposition that Mr. More is not, in any ordinary sense, a Platonist". Well, one is grateful for any light on Mr. Tate's intentions in his extraordinary essay, but how can his accusation and his disclaimer possibly be reconciled with his printed words?—

> Mr. More is, among other things, a Platonist. What is a Platonist? Is he a man who believes what Plato believed? Or is he a man who uses the Socratic method for the exposure of contradiction? If he is the latter, to what end does he expose contradiction? Since Mr. More obviously believes things that Plato did not, he is, if he be a Platonist at all, one by virtue of his use of the Socratic method. But why does he use it? There is only one answer: for the support of independent faith. He is a Platonist only in the sense in which all men are said to be either Aristotelians or Platonists.*

What is one to go by? Do words mean anything or not? If this is not a transparently false dilemma from which is drawn "the ludicrous proposition that Mr. More is not, in any ordinary sense, a Platonist"—then let the alienists come on. I must have been ready for them long ago.

And, indeed, something of the sort would seem in effect to be suggested by Mr. Tate. For he says I have not even misunderstood his main argument; I have simply not seen it or not recognized its existence. I have thus ignored in my answer the subject of his essay. At the same time Mr. Tate credits me with ingenuity, and this would certainly have been ingenious—the ingenuity of a madman. The subject, he says, "was the relation of humanism to the idea of authority". But, I must protest, this is precisely what I had suspected;—though I was not alone in feeling bewildered by the well-nigh impenetrable obscurity of many of our critic's sentences. And I had thought that, astonished by the character of his accusations against the humanists, I had attempted to discover just what his "idea of authority" was, as the first question to be settled. I had thought, too, that when his real argument was laid bare, stripped of confusion and contradictions, it had become clear that Mr. Tate's source of authority was completely identical with that of the humanists, so that his essay, though full of sound and fury, signified nothing—or, as he says, lacked a real object.

Doubtless I am perverse, if not actually mad, to be of the same opinion still, in the face of Mr. Tate's confident assertions. I can only confess the fact, and leave its interpretation to others. But I must add that I am also amazed to find that these confident assertions are merely preliminary to an involved and obscure argument going off at a tangent from the real issues as these were presented in "Humanism and Impudence", and ending with the assurance—not perhaps so comforting as it may look—that only the distance between an aqueous humanism and a vinaceous humanism separates our critic from us.

For this, however, it appears, I have only myself to blame. I misstated Mr. Tate's religious position—a fact I deeply regret—and so prefaced my inquiry into his conception of authority by an incorrect inference. As far as I can see, my analysis of his argument is not thereby invalidated in any way whatsoever; but it is perfectly true that, had I not labored under a singular misapprehension, the *form* of my inquiry would have been different in certain respects. The task, in fact, of making plain the confusion in Mr. Tate's thought and the frivolous basis of his grievance against humanism would have been considerably simplified, had I understood that he was urging the claims of an authority which he himself was not prepared to acknowledge. He, however, now makes

* *Hound & Horn*, p. 248.

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he most of an opportunity to convict me of an error, and indeed makes the whole first section of his "Reply" hinge upon it. But to this end he is constrained so to transform his original argument as in effect to repudiate it. I forbear comment on such procedure and on the accompanying accusation that my analysis of his essay was based merely on one or two isolated passages—an accusation so transparently empty that, were I in need of justifying my criticism, it could provoke only my gratitude. I will, then, simply observe that this is to put a heavier load on my mistake than it will bear; and that it is something more, which I could wish Mr. Tate had not made it necessary for me to explain.

There was, in other words, a reason for my misapprehension. I did not, again, understand what never had been said—or rather, in this case, what never had been said until after my own essay was in print. In "Humanism and Impudence" I remarked of Mr. Tate: "He professes to speak as a Christian. Indeed, he seeks quite plainly to imply that he speaks from the haven of Catholicism (Roman or other)". Now Mr. Tate asserts that I had no basis for this inference, and he quotes what he "actually said", to prove it. And he makes my inference look unjustifiable, so unjustifiable that there is definitely something wrong, somewhere. And this is what is wrong: Mr. Tate's "Fallacy of Humanism" was originally published in England, in the *Criterion*, last July. I wrote my criticism of it shortly afterwards, of necessity using the *Criterion* text and making all my references to it. I was informed that the "Fallacy of Humanism" was to be republished in America in the Winter Number of the *Hound & Horn*, but I was not told that Mr. Tate was revising his essay for this republication, making several material changes in the text and adding several important notes. And my copy of the January-March issue of the *Hound & Horn* did not reach me until after the January issue of the BOOKMAN had been printed. Here, then, is the passage from Mr. Tate's "Fallacy of Humanism", as printed in the *Criterion*, on which—together, it must be remembered, with the unmistakable implication of his essay as a whole—my inference was actually and perforce based:

> There is only one necessary religion, as Mr. Eliot has said, for men in the West; this was clear to the anti-authoritarian mind of William James as well. It must be understood that this essay urges the claim of no particular Western church, however unmistakable the tendency of its reasoning may appear to be; but what I have said about authority, and the connection between the Reformation and the rise of "naturalism", lead to no very ambiguous conclusion.

And here is the revised passage—revised, evidently, because it did, with its context, suggest such an inference as mine—which Mr. Tate quotes as what he "actually said":

> It must be understood that this essay urges the claim of no particular Western church, and it is in no sense a confession of faith; but the connection between the Reformation and Naturalism, and what I conceive authority to be, define the position that the Humanists must occupy if they wish to escape intellectual suicide.

Readers will draw their own conclusions from this unacknowledged substitution of a passage of which I was necessarily ignorant for the passage which I did necessarily use. For myself, I shall only remark, with a controversialist of an earlier day:

> All his evasions vain
> And reasonings, though through mazes, lead him still
> But to his own conviction.

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HAROLD LAMB AND HISTORICAL ROMANCE

THE CAREER OF THE AUTHOR OF "THE CRUSADES" AS SEEN BY HIS DISCOVERER

by Arthur Sullivant Hoffman

THOUGH he didn't in the least realize it himself, Harold Lamb began writing *The Crusades: Iron Men and Saints* nearly fourteen years ago. Ancient Asia had cast its spell upon him and there were already a dozen years of work and study behind him when we discussed the question of making the Crusades the subject of the book to follow *Tamerlane*.

One of his ancestors had been of the Washington Irving literary circle and others had been naval men. Heredity was so strong in him that at the age of six he definitely decided to write naval stories, and when the eyesight test at Annapolis barred the Navy at first hand his resolution became the stronger. But there were Asian germs at work in him.

Back in 1917, when he was but two years out of college, there came to me, following a sea story (historical, by the way), a fiction tale about Khlit, an old Cossack of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and I published it in *Adventure*. That magazine during my years as editor ran strongly to reliable historical settings for its fiction; the readers followed it with interest and they at once took Khlit to their bosoms.

For nearly eleven years there was a steady flow of stories, novelettes and serials—fifty-two of them—all dealing with Asia of the past. There were only four laid elsewhere, and none after 1920. Asia had him. There was a dearth of sources to draw on in the English language; in addition to several European languages, he learned to read Arabic, Chinese and a third that I've forgotten, besides something of various other Asiatic tongues, for European sources, too, were scarce and second-hand and he wanted the ultimate facts.

Khlit wandered far and wide over Asia. Later there appeared Abdul Dost, one of the Moghuls (Mongols) who conquered India, and Khlit joined him in his adventures. Genghis Khan and Tamerlane themselves stalked, living, through the pages of his stories. Later there came a Cossack, Ayub, under Boris Godunov, with his grandfather Khlit riding sturdily alongside. John Paul Jones leaped into the procession—did you, good American, know that he died serving Catherine the Great as admiral on the Black Sea against the Turks? Harold Lamb was the first to bring this episode into English fiction. Prester John and Stenka Razin, Persian, Arab, Rajput, Lap, Buriat, Tibetan, Armenian, Georgian, Mongol and scores of others from all parts and many centuries of Asia brought each his share of Asia's history into Mr. Lamb's stories.

In 1926 he took the rather inchoate mass of the *Babar Nameh* (The Book of the Tiger), and condensed its 160,000 words into a smooth flowing narrative of 22,000. It is the actual autobiography of Babar, Moghul (Turco-Mongol) conqueror of India, a great-

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great-grandson of Tamerlane, acknowledged by European scholars as deserving a place beside the confessions of Rousseau and Cellini, yet practically unknown in this country. Mr. Lamb was the first to make it available as a continuous, unified narrative.

For eleven years before he wrote *Genghis Khan* he lived with these people, saturated himself with their histories and civilizations, the homely details of their daily lives. Always he was the scholar first, the good fictionist second. Rarely did a story appear without his historian's letter of comment for the magazine's department in which the authors chatted with the readers—letters meticulous as to every least variation from established historical fact, carefully balanced, ripe, fairly bursting with intimate knowledge of the broad and only partially explored field that had become his specialty. And very human letters—it was not dry bones and dusty records that interested him; he wanted to find out what kind of men these had been and what manner of life they led. In the beginning he couldn't. Nobody else had; there was no one to whom he could turn. He must pioneer. So he pioneered. And when Harold Lamb sets himself to a task it gets done. Concentration? Thoroughness? Gentle persistence? Irresistible driving power? Harold Lamb. The task, while a stupendous labor, was in this case only a joyful obsession. He writes me from Rome, busily at work on the second volume of *The Crusades*:

> The work here is devilish—the Crusades loom up like a sea that drowns a chap—the mass of evidence buried in hundreds of old Latin records is appalling, and the controversies are frightful. I'm having a bully time.

But during the eleven years of the fifty-two pieces of fiction he was accomplishing much more than the building of broad, strong foundations as a historian. He was learning, through fiction, to make the ancient peoples as living, breathing and human to readers as they were to him.

The road was not easy going. Aside from the one magazine there was no market for these stories—one of those curious editorial stone walls standing across his path. "Mongols and such? Nobody writes about them; therefore nobody wants to read about them. Historical stuff, anyhow, and costume fiction is out of fashion now." The dictum was the harder to bear because he knew that people did like to read about "Mongols and such" if they were the right kind of Mongols and such. The popularity of his stories with the magazine's readers had been proving that to him for years and, later, the longer ones of these same stories, like *White Falcon* and *The House of the Falcon*, were to prove it still further in book form—not to mention the three books that have swept him into his place as a historian who is an acknowledged authority on both sides of the Atlantic and who can make his history as interesting as the most colorful fiction.

But through those eleven years that stone wall stood, and there came a time when he questioned the sense of going on with the only kind of writing into which he could put his whole heart—questioned even his right to do so. He sent me the outline of a purely conventional story of the type that most magazines will buy and I sent it back to him, saying that thousands could do this kind of thing but that his own particular kind of work had never been done before, urging him to go ahead. I think his dogged fighting spirit needed no more than the reassurance of a single person in the "writing game" who saw things as he did. There was nothing from then on but steady plugging at his chosen work.

But there had been no mention of the Crusades. That idea, too, had been building up in him for a dozen years. In his stories there appeared with increasing frequency some "Krit", some Christian, based on the historical and much earlier but unsung Marco Polos who, by adventure more tremendous than can exist today, found them-

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selves alone among peoples no more than myths to Europeans, their very names perhaps unknown. Several of these were Crusaders. The Mongols swept through Armenia, Georgia, and past Constantinople, crushed back the Mameluke foes of the Franks in the Holy Land, established themselves east of the Crusader strongholds, and of course Mr. Lamb went with them. The world-smashing of Genghis Khan brought about an intercourse between Europe and the East that had never before existed, so more and more Mr. Lamb met Europeans as he lived the centuries among his Asiatics. And a forefront of that Europe was Palestine, with the Crusaders finally entrenched there. More and more his interest drifted toward these European contacts on the west.

The notable fact, of course, is that he came to the subject of the Crusades from the Asiatic instead of the European point of view, one from the Western world looking with the eyes of one living for generations among those of the world to the East, and chiefly from the point of view of the Mongols, to whom both Christian and Moslem were foreigners in race and religion. An enviable approach for the historian.

When I talked to him just before he sailed for the libraries in Rome and elsewhere and for a personal examination of the scenes most involved in Crusade activity, he was keenly alive to the advantages of his position and to the opportunity it offered, but at least two years before *Genghis Khan* appeared that opportunity was beckoning him on. In a letter to readers he wrote:

"Our existing stock of histories of the Crusades is unfortunate. The early stock was taken from the main Church chronicles and consisted of a lot of silence and a great deal of fanfare exaggerating the deeds of the *Croisés*. Then appeared the cynical history, making much hay of the fact that the Crusaders usually fought a losing fight and were sometimes the very opposite of saints. Lastly the ultra-modern history has cropped up, making much of the superstition and ignorance of the Crusaders and tracing out with great pains the 'advantages' of the Crusades in establishing contact between the East and West, introducing Asia's inventions into Europe, etc.

"In decrying the exaltation of the Crusaders and in hunting out the mercantile gains from their efforts and deaths, we have somehow rather lost sight of the intimate personal story of the Crusaders—which a reading of the Arab chronicles serves to bring back to us.

"So much of our history and biography and fiction, too, has been written out of prejudice or a preconceived bias. 'Catherine the Great was one of the most gifted women of all time' *vs* 'Catherine the Great was one of the greatest wantons of all time'. 'Alexander of Macedonia was a superman' *vs* 'Alexander was mad'. You know how these things shape up.

"Nowadays one cannot enter a bookshop without seeing on all sides 'The Truth About This' or 'Outlines of That'. The desire of readers to learn is real enough. The fault is with the writers, who lack both scholarship and inclination to devote months or years to finding out the truth as nearly as possible. The result is that the very modern histories are usually 'outlines' right enough.

"Scholarship seems to have died in the last century. Anyway, I'll wager you can't name a better story of the Crusades than Scott's *The Talisman*. Sir Walter admitted that he wrote from meagre information—there was little to be had in his day—but he was a scholar and a conscientious student of his epoch.

"History, our dictionaries say, is 'a narrative devoted to the exposition of the unfolding of events'. Discarding this husk of Latin phrasing the dictionary says that history is the story of what actually happened. By the way, it's interesting to notice that the dictionary ranks fiction equally with chronicle. And 'unfolding' is just the word. What is history but the uncovering or unfolding of the past? The story of what certain men did

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—their adventures—because it's more interesting to read about what they did than what they were. And easier to get at the truth that way.

"It's so absurd to sit down and start in to whitewash some individual or people and call it history. And equally absurd to assemble a few facts and draw personal conclusions from them without taking the trouble to get at *all* the facts.

"This is beginning to wander. But it's so tiresome to look for history in many modern publications and find only personal opinions, deductions, vilification or deification, and references to faulty authorities. And so many modern 'historical' novels, written by hasty Americans, are enough to make Sienkiewicz and Tolstoy walk the earth again.

"Getting back to our Arab again—it's been awfully refreshing to read about the Crusaders from Arabic sources. But 'The Shield' is not a story of the Crusades—the *Croisés* figure only in the taking of Constantinople. . . . Also an Arab story to the effect that the sword of Roland—Durandal—was taken by the *saracins*, after the death of the hero, and hidden away in Asia Minor. So I'm thinking of a second tale, dealing with the search for the sword by a Crusader."

It is the scholar speaking, the very human but very scholarly scholar to whom anything less than the utmost nicety in accuracy, thoroughness and everlasting allegiance to the real truth of the facts is anathema. He can be satisfied only when he has ferreted out the last attainable fact and, with scrupulous justice and unprejudiced mind, weighed it out to its last atom of significance. Upon the road to the truth Harold Lamb is a Juggernaut to all that stands in his way or crosses his path.

But the hands on the controls of the Juggernaut car are very kindly and human hands and the truth he insists upon finding is the human truth, not the mere dry clatter of statistics and facts of record. He wants to know "what kind of people they were", to meet them as humans. And, when he has learned to know them as living beings, his long fiction training enables him to pass them on to us, colorful, alive, real. The years of work have borne their fruit.

A recent letter from Rome throws a good deal of light:

> I'm more than one-half drunk with color and memory of the long trips through the Constantinople region, and—just back from there—Rhodes, Cyprus, Syria, Palestine. Camped among the Arabs for weeks, going from one Crusader's castle to another, and I've never known an experience quite like that. In the interior the country and people are little changed since the medieval days, and the great citadels are finer than anything in France. It does grip the imagination.

Imagination and enthusiasm. Add these to the other qualities and we understand why *The Crusades* is such wholly enjoyable reading as well as being a distinguished contribution to authoritative history.

THE BOOKS OF HAROLD LAMB

MARCHING SANDS. *Appleton,* 1920
THE HOUSE OF THE FALCON. *Appleton,* 1921
WHITE FALCON. *McBride,* 1926
GENGHIS KHAN. *McBride,* 1927
TAMERLANE. *McBride,* 1928
THE CRUSADES: IRON MEN AND SAINTS
Doubleday, Doran, 1930

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ROADSIDE MEETINGS OF A LITERARY NOMAD

VI. MACDOWELL—ELLEN GLASGOW—"COMMISSIONER ROOSEVELT"—R. W. GILDER

by Hamlin Garland

Most of my companions in Chicago were poor, and Hobart Chatfield Chatfield-Taylor, the son of a millionaire, was described to us as the shining leader of the city's "Four Hundred"—those who were striving to raise the standard of social customs. I knew of Chatfield-Taylor only as one who had valiantly tried to establish a weekly paper of which Slason Thompson was the editor, but Fuller reported him to be writing novels of Chicago society as he really knew it.

To me he was a very remote and wholly illogical product of this smoky town and, in the conviction that we had little in common except our faith in the value of the World's Fair, I made no effort to meet him. Later I came to know and value him as a fine, scholarly and courteous gentleman.

The University at this time was just beginning to boom under Dr. William Rainey Harper, and the Art Institute, a small building, stood on the unkempt lake front, a monument to the zeal and courage of Charles L. Hutchinson. Miles of the streets between these two institutions were lined with smoke-blackened wooden houses, set high as if to avoid spring floods. Yet under the cloud of its smoke, bands of devoted idealists were toiling to make a glorious city, one which should be the antithesis of the dreadful actuality. The "White City" had become an inspiration to them all.

My lodgings were near the lake, which was the only permanently beautiful thing in the city, and there I was at work on the writing of a novel of Wisconsin, a theme which had been suggested to me by a visit to my native village and the valley where my father and mother had settled in 1856.

Among the aspiring Hoosiers hack-writing on newspapers in the city was a genial heavy-set young man named George Barr McCutcheon, who had decided to leave local material to George Ade and Peter Dunne and devote himself to European romance. Having written a story called *Beverley of Graustark* he offered it to Herbert Stone. Stone saw its value at once and published it. Its success was instant and started its author on a long and highly prosperous career as the historian of those mythical kingdoms of south-eastern Europe. He had never been abroad, but he had the faculty of imagining Balkan kings and queens in terms of Cook and Brown counties, and this was the kind of fiction Americans understood and loved. His books sold enormously and soon he was able to visit in princely state the countries he had so alluringly described without having seen.

If royalties are a measure of merit, McCutcheon's books must have high rank for they sold in hundreds of thousands. His work was good wholesome entertainment, of more real value, perhaps, than the labor-

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ious attempts at social history which others of us were making.

My Hoosier friends were specializing in noble romance. Something in the level lands of Indiana fostered a fanciful fiction. Charles Major dealt of the time when knighthood was in flower and Mary Hartwell Catherwood idealized French exploration with financial success. It was all a most unexpected efflorescence of the backwoods of Indiana and the swamp-lands of Illinois. Eugene Field loved to associate Mrs. Catherwood with Hoopestown and Charles Major with Crawfordsville, and declared that these stories were all built according to formula; but they appealed to many thousands of readers in city and country, and as they were all heroic in action and chivalric in spirit, no one could complain of them, although to some of us they appeared absurd. These authors wrote of what interested them. Bored by their surroundings they took the lands that were farthest from the prairies and flimsy towns of their daily scene.

What an amazing outbreak of sentimental romance that was! Lew Wallace with his *Ben Hur*, Major with *When Knighthood Was in Flower*, McCutcheon with his *Graustark*, Maurice Thompson with *Alice of Old Vincennes*, and Mrs. Catherwood with *Rose of Old New France*, all addressed to the outwardly commonplace citizens of the dull and prosperous midland, to whom these stories brought joy. But they fed a definite hunger and, while I resented them then and scoffed at them, I now see that they were a natural reaction from dusty roads and weedy fence-corners, just as today millions seek relief in jazzy music and murky love affairs. Only a few want the wholesome truth even when expressed in the best literary form.

XLVI

In 1894 I was living on Elm Street, in Chicago, not far from the lake, and among my neighbors was a musical critic named William Armstrong who came to me one day in the autumn of that year to say that he had just been calling on Edward MacDowell at the Auditorium Hotel and that he had expressed a wish to meet me.

This surprised and delighted me for MacDowell had been a shining figure ever since I first heard him play in the Boston Music Hall in 1888. Music-lovers in Boston were pleasantly excited by the news that a young American who had won great fame abroad, had returned to America and would appear with the Symphony Orchestra, playing one of his own concertos. Naturally, as one who was pledged to advance American art of whatever sort, I was in my place to applaud the composer.

It was an afternoon performance. The hall was crowded with musicians, music-lovers and students, eager to see and hear this conquering young pianist whose fame had preceded him by several years. When he came on, shy, smiling, nobly handsome, a thunder of applause arose. He was our first creative musician, and we welcomed him with joy in his youth, his beauty and his skill.

With what Celtic fire he played! How superbly rich and triumphant he seemed! He was a prince of the world of music, a native artist to whom all honor and wealth and happiness had come. I had never come in contact with him or with anyone who knew him until now, and as I followed Armstrong down the broad hall of the Auditorium Hotel I could not quite bridge the gulf that lay between that brilliant artist in the Boston Music Hall and the man on whom I was about to call.

As we reached his door the sound of a piano played with masterly skill proclaimed the great musician. Armstrong's knock silenced the player, and in a moment Mrs. MacDowell presented herself. After a word with me she turned and said, "Edward, this is Hamlin Garland, whose book you liked so much".

MacDowell, who had retreated behind the

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piano, now came forward to meet me, shyly, boyishly, one hand sliding along the edge of the piano as a child runs a hand along a banister to relieve his embarrassment. He was a glorious young figure. His scintillant, laughing blue eyes, his abundant brown hair and, beyond all, his smile and his jocund voice, delighted me. When he told me that he had been reading my *Crumbling Idols* and that it had been an inspiration to him, I was quite overwhelmed.

He told me that his problems as a composer were precisely those I had delineated in my essays and that he was working toward a music which should be American. "Our music thus far is mainly a scholarly restatement of Old-World themes; in other words it is derived from Germany—as all my earlier pieces were," he added with a chuckle.

Knowing that he was preparing for his concert I did not stay long, but we parted with a promise to meet again. In the years which followed I heard much of him, for he was one of the most alert minds of his profession. He was not merely the musician, he was alive to all the arts. Each summer while he was in Peterboro, his New Hampshire home, I was trailing in Montana, New Mexico or Colorado, and when we met in the autumn I was full of the Indian songs I had heard.

One evening at his home in New York he was at work on an Indian theme and had on his piano a volume of Alice Fletcher's versions of Omaha songs. After playing one or two of these he asked me what I thought of them. I answered, "They suggest real Indian themes, but they are Sankeyized. That isn't the way they sound when you hear them in a tepee or around a campfire. They have been robbed of their stone-age tones and rhythm".

"Can't you sing some of them?" asked Mrs. MacDowell.

"No," I confessed, "they are very difficult to catch. They seem to me to be on a different scale from our music. If I had a drum and was seated in the light of a fire I might feel my way into them."

This did not excuse me. "I'll turn down the lights," she said, "and here is a tambourine which you can use as a tom-tom."

Being thus involved I took the tambourine and by way of some preliminary howling and drumming succeeded in touching once or twice on something like the savage strains I carried in my memory. Ending on the deep humming chant so characteristic of all Red Indian music, I said, "That's the best I can do—and it's only a hint of the real thing".

MacDowell gave the manuscript on his piano a flip and said, "You make these things of mine seem like milk and water".

I then spoke of the yelping with which the Navajos begin their songs, an imitation of the coyotes, and explained that they appeared to be jovial song-fests, somewhat like a group of young college boys. "The love songs, however, are plaintively beautiful. I was especially moved by the herd-boy singing a clear high strain as he drove his flock out into the valley at dawn. I wish you could have heard that. It would make a magnificent theme. Why not go west with me next year and see what would happen?"

He looked at Marian and smiled rather wistfully. "I'd like to do that, but it is a long way to go, and besides I'm afraid I couldn't stand the food and the beds. I'm not used to roughing it. You admit the food is bad?"

"Dreadful!—but we could take our own outfit."

He half promised to consider it and then turned to another phase of the problem. "I do not believe in 'lifting' a Navajo theme and furbishing it into some kind of a musical composition and calling it American music. Our problem is not so simple as all that."

XLVII

As many had foretold, the building of the "White City" had brought a numerous colony of painters, sculptors and architects to Chicago, some of whom declared their intention of making their permanent home there but

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only a handful lingered on after the city fell back into something like its former drabness of enterprise. Among these were Hermon MacNeil and Edward Kemeys, both sculptors, Charles Francis Browne, a painter of landscapes, and Ralph Clarkson, a portrait painter. All these became my friends, through the interest of Lorado Taft, a native son of Illinois who was one of the most optimistic and vigorous of the colony.

MacNeil and Browne were "Yankees", the one lean and blond, the other plump and sandy, and I speak of them especially for the reason that in the summer of '95, two years after the fall of the "White City", I agreed to conduct them to Colorado in search of "material". What a summer that was to us all! Our first stop was at Colorado Springs. From here we staged into Cripple Creek, then at the height of its fame, and for a week or two absorbed its life and scenery. One of the men we met here, a young cowboy and "bad man", was as beautiful as a black panther, and undoubtedly aided me in writing *The Eagle's Heart*, as a group of other cowboys at a rodeo at Divide helped in another novel called *Hesper*. MacNeil made a sketch of one of these men throwing a rope—and while he was working on this job I rode off down into the Currant Creek country to ride with a round-up—a most valuable experience.

Leaving MacNeil to complete some sketches, Browne and I took our way down to the Royal Gorge, which we traversed from end to end on foot in order to fully sense its majesty. At my request Browne painted it at the point called the Hanging Bridge, leaving the railway out however, for I wished it to look as it did to the explorers of 1800. The sketch hangs on my study wall today, but the artist has passed to the arcanum of his Swedenborgian faith.

From this tremendous canyon we boarded a train and rode over Marshall Pass to Ouray where, in almost breathless enthusiasm, swearing and praying, the artist tried to record some hint of the grandeur which rose on every side. "It can't done," he protested. "At least I can't do it."

After a week in this superbly beautiful region, we took the railway "elbow" around to the Southern Ute Agency where MacNeil —eager to model red men—joined us. Here among Chief Charley's people we soaked ourselves in the sunshine and silence of the noons, and gorgeous moonlit, song-filled nights. Chicago was a forgotten tumult, a smudge on the edge of a distant lake. This land of the Utes was as new to me as to my eastern companions. I had never come in contact with the Mexican influence before.

The trader at the "emergency" spoke Ute, a very rare accomplishment then, and I made a list of the most elemental words—words like sky, sun, water, horse and man. I sat for hours in his wareroom, watching his women customers and listening to his banter. Something oriental was in their speech, a wistful, childish whine which the trader exactly imitated.

I watched the issue of rations, and wandered about the camp, noting down characteristic customs and costumes. The young men nearly all wore white robes drawn to their eyes—which lent them the aspect of Arabs, and at night as I listened to the singing of the "Tea Dance" around the fire, I found the singing like that of the Persian women I had heard at the Fair. Each night I went to sleep while the lover's flute was wailing above the solemn rush of the river.

XLVIII

From Colorado we descended to Santa Fe, to the pueblo of Isleta and to Zuñi, but as we were on our way to the Snake Dance at Walpi—which promised to be the most exciting and valuable of all our experiences—we did not linger. I knew something but not much of this ceremony, the strange festival of the strangest people in all America.

At Winslow we hired horses, three wretched nags, and set out for Keams Canyon, some

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fifty miles away, where a traders' village offered shelter. Neither of my companions had ever ridden but they pluckily climbed to their saddles. As we entered the sand dunes the heat was terrific, and it soon became apparent that we were sadly mounted. My horse was capable of only a slow walk and the others were little better.

We reached "La Rue Wash", our first watering place, about noon, and Browne was as ready as his steed to rest under one of the three tall trees which marked the spot. Groaning with pain he fell from his saddle and stretched out on the sand. MacNeil, lighter and more athletic, was in better shape, but even he was glad to dismount.

On the opposite side of the shallow streambed, some freighters were camped with two four-horse wagons. One of the drivers appeared to be a Navajo, a man of kindly nature, for he came down to the edge of the brook and said, "Mebbe so better cross. Pooly soon heap rain".

Looking up at the sky I could see nothing of the storm he predicted. But I had a belief in these out-door weather prophets and, since we could rest on the other side of the wash just as well as where we were, I urged a crossing. In less than an hour rain was falling in torrents and a stream of water six feet deep was rolling down that sandy wash, making the crossing impossible. The transformation of our world was astounding. Cold, hungry, wet, we crouched under one of the wagons and waited for the downpour to cease.

Our first chance for shelter was at a Mormon ranch, some ten or fifteen miles ahead and the march which had seemed so simple while the sun was shining now appeared almost impossible, for the horses were chilled and hungry as well as weary.

The storm passed as suddenly as it came, and we mounted our dejected steeds and started up the trail which followed the valley. Towards sunset the Navajo suggested camping and, since our nags could scarcely walk, we asked permission to remain with the outfit. This request the English boss readily granted and, while our animals picked at the sparse grass, we gathered greasewood for a fire.

None of us slept much and about three in the morning, when the moon came out with almost flaming brilliance, I arose, caught and saddled my horse, and rode up the trail in search of the Mormon ranch.

That ride I shall never forget. At times I passed the huts of sleeping Navajos, pursued by packs of wolfish dogs, and as the sun rose tall dark men with gay sashes around their waists and bands of red and green about their hair came out to ask for tobacco. Once or twice I passed flocks of sheep and goats driven by boys singing wild refrains. Women appeared at the doors of their low conical huts and began their work, weaving at rude looms or cooking over minute fires. It was like a journey in Arabia or Palestine.

At about nine I came to the Mormon ranch, two small red stone houses and a corral built on a low ridge near a spring. Its keeper was a Mormon who hadn't even one wife. He was just about to eat his breakfast and I joined him most gratefully.

MacNeil and Browne came in at noon and we decided to send our horses back and hire the Mormon to drive us the remaining part of the way. This we did, reaching the pueblo at sunset.

Walpi is a high mesa rising out of the plain like an enormous battleship, and as we approached it we came upon a group of governmental ethnologists camped near its base. We found lodging with Heli, a Hopi, whose children were able to speak English.

XLIX

For a week or more we slept on the dirt floor of Heli's house, ate her bread and eggs and bacon, absorbing the prehistoric forms of life which this sky-born habitation presented. The nine-day ceremony of the Snake Dance was in progress. Each day the snake priests

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went forth to gather the serpents in each quarter of the earth. At night we saw them come in, weary, serious, silent, each with a buckskin bag heavy with serpents. We stood above the underground ceremonial chamber, listening to the throbbing songs whose words were unknown even to the singers themselves, feeling ourselves at the dawn of human history—and at last came the day of the sacred dance, which is in reality a prayer for rain.

In order to witness this ritual, ranchers drove in over the desert and Navajos assembled from their nearby hogans. I was at the elbow of the snake-priests, seeing and hearing everything, understanding some of it.

I saw the painted priests of the cult snatch rattlesnakes from a bag and take them in their mouths. I saw these serpents bite the cheeks of the devotees. I saw them writhing in a great heap at my feet. It was like a dream. I ceased to hear, I only gazed as the dancers circled the plaza, two and two, the one holding the serpent in his lips, the other teasing it with a feather. It was all so far-reaching, so deep-sounding in human experiences that I forgot every other fact in the world.

Now came the girls to fling a shower of sacred corn-meal over the squirming heap. Then, swift, undulating, lithe, the priests bent one by one to fill both hands with snakes and, holding them aloft like banners, plunged down the steep sides of the mesa, dutifully returning these messengers of the gods to their dens in the rocks of the plain. From the edge of the cliff we could see the priests halt and kneel to pray as they released their captives.

The dance was over. The snake brothers were now carrying to the gods of the underworld the thanks of the people for rains past and a petition for others to come.

The close of this astounding ceremony left me physically benumbed. It was elementally savage and serious. Its effect was hypnotic. I entered the world which these people inhabit. For the time being I was one of them. I set to work at once to record what I had seen, not as a scientist but as a writer of stories, a singer of songs.

One of the observers of this ceremony was a tall, lean, brown man, who came to Walpi at the head of a train of horses from Colorado. His name was Prudden and his home was in New York. We became friends at once and when he found that I expected to go on to the Grand Canyon of the Colorado, he said, "Why not go with me? I am on my way".

This was another meeting which led to a long friendship. We saw Zuñi and the Grand Canyon together and later in New York we often met. He helped me to formulate some of the scientific theories of my *The Tyranny of the Dark*, for he was the head of the bacteriological department of Columbia University.

The immediate result of this summer was an article on the Snake Dance which *Harper's Weekly* used some time during the autumn, but the deeper impressions came later in stories of the Hopi, Ute and Navajo peoples. Later still I used the glory of the Uncompahgre Mountains in *Her Mountain Lover*. In fact all of my work was influenced by the concept and emotions of this epoch-making outing. MacNeil was almost equally benefitted. The work he did at Cripple Creek and Igñacio helped him to win the Roman Academy Scholarship which in turn made him one of the leading sculptors in America—so that two years ago I helped elect him to the American Academy, an honor which neither of us had anticipated even in our most fantastic dreams of success.

All through the 'nineties, with Chicago as a center, I continued to make tours of the South and East as a lecturer, but in summer I repeatedly sought the solitudes of Colorado, Montana, Wyoming and New Mexico, eager to re-enjoy their glories. In each of these vacations I carried a red leather pocket notebook in which I set down impressionistic

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studies of hill and stream, and records of the characters I met. For the most part my camps were solitary. I was never content until I had climbed above the wagon track. My favorite camping places were just below the timber line, at about eleven thousand feet. Sometimes I was with a miner, sometimes with a fellow-writer, never with a hunter. I carried no gun.

In 1897 my brother and I mingled with the Sioux at Standing Rock Agency, North Dakota, and later messed with the soldiers during a Cheyenne outbreak at Lame Deer. From these studies, some four years later, my most successful novel was formed, although I made no literal use of my notes.

It is true that I skittered from state to state but I carried with me a point of view which gave, I believe, a certain cohesion to my work. It is essentially historical, for always my stories arose out of a careful study of real people and real conditions. They might have been better stories, that I will admit, but they were never falsifications of life and character for they were based on these field studies.

Many of them were set down while I was poised over a rocky peak or as I sat my horse at a turn in the mountain trail, but others, written beside the campfire, are more coherent and complete.

As I turn the leaves I find myself moved to fill in the lines, to restore so far as I can the physical sunshine and shadow as well as the mental exaltations only partly recorded. I cannot quite bring my hand to destroy these records. It would be like destroying some part of myself.

L

In December, 1895, after two years' absence, I returned to New York, and for several weeks rejoiced in my renewals of friendships. I lunched with Howells and Burroughs and met Gilder at the club. Alden I saw at his office. Herne welcomed me at his home in Harlem and I had tea with Kate Douglas Wiggin, Ruth McEnery Stuart and others of my women friends. I was a guest at the Players and also at the Salmagundi Club, courtesies which made my stay unusually pleasant.

Outwardly the city was vastly cleaner than Chicago and I rejoiced in its sunshine and freedom from soft-coal smoke. It had fewer skyscrapers than Chicago and seemed flat and low in comparison. It appeared more foreign in its population, more Jewish. Rightly or wrongly I recorded the fact that "Eastern writers in militant groups, while they know one another, have few good words for one another. The struggle for place is sharper than in Chicago, where something of the get-together spirit of the boom town still lingers".

Without realizing just what caused this rancor of criticism, I recognized that it existed. It was, in truth, the expression of a city that had arrived. New York, like London, was no longer a town on the edge of culture but a center of vast national forces. Clique snarled at clique with no care as to its effect on the fortunes of real estate speculators. It was now a question of art. Each critic knew that he was right and that most of the others were wrong and that all comment outside New York City was negligible, just as London had little regard for the judgments of Liverpool or Manchester.

There was less "nursing of genius" each year. When it had had no great writers New York had proclaimed the merits of second-rate men as loudly as any, but now that it was drawing to itself the best in the nation, it was beginning to question the merits of those who did not happen to be of the school or group at the top.

One of the men who was most valiantly working in the national spirit was Hopkinson Smith. He was in truth three men in one. As F. H. Smith, he was a civil engineer and built lighthouses on the New England coast. As F. Hopkinson Smith he painted water-colors and made drawings of picturesque bits of New York, and as Hopkinson Smith he wrote novels of Baltimore and delightful short stories of Virginia and Maryland. His

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Colonel Carter—"Cyahtah of Cyahtahsville"—was one of the earliest of the humorous yet sympathetic studies of the ex-Confederate soldiers who prided themselves on being "un-reconstructed".

Smith was one of the happiest men of my acquaintance. He enjoyed his work. He was a delightful companion and a fine citizen. As a struggling author, ten years younger than he, I regarded him with admiration—not as I admired Howells, but with full admission of his skill. Everything he did succeeded. His water-colors sold. His stories were in demand and his lighthouses not only withstood the pounding of the waves but gave him material for *Caleb West, Master Diver* and other novels, and in addition he was highly successful as a reader and lecturer.

Among my notes I find these: "I spent last evening with Grinnell, the student of red men, and I was profoundly pleased by the modesty of his manner and the candor of his statement. It is almost impossible to imagine that he has been so closely in touch with the plains' Indians as his work indicates. He is a handsome, well-cared-for bachelor of forty-eight or so, alert and brown and sinewy. His curious sidewise glance is searching and humorous.

"His knowledge of the Pawnees, Cheyennes and Blackfeet is authoritative. He never goes beyond his experience. There is no display of what he knows and he is eager to do justice.

"Another Thanksgiving day. A cold gray sky over leafless trees and a dull light upon the earth. After two months in the city I am feeling the bad effects of it in my weak muscles and seeing it in the increased pallor of my face. There is no place for me here. I need the outdoor life".

LI

Among the men with whom I worked during the early 'nineties was S. S. McClure, a young Irishman who had made his way from Illinois to New York some years before, and whose nimble mind had shaped a newspaper syndicate of growing importance. McClure was a man of ideas—no one who met him failed to grant that—and his syndicate was the application of the coöperative idea to journalism. He argued that if a large number of journals would agree to pay a small sum for the use of a serial to be published at the same time at stated intervals, he could furnish them the most popular serial literature of the day.

The plan prospered. "McClure's Syndicate" in 1892 became an exceedingly well-known institution and Sam McClure an equally well-known character. He was a small blue-eyed quick-spoken man, dynamic of soul and bursting with plans. He always walked like a man in a hurry and his thoughts outran his tongue, mobile as that was. He amused some people by his boyish enthusiasms, his sudden changes of thought and his extravagance of statement, but he was a force to be reckoned with.

From the ground of his syndicate success, he began to argue that a monthly magazine should be as topical as a weekly. He had no time for leisurely repositories of scholarly articles and stories for the few. "A magazine is only a monthly newspaper", he maintained, and in 1891 he established *McClure's Magazine*, a thin, little periodical in yellow covers whose table of contents was made up partly of his syndicated articles and partly from new material. As I had written occasional stories for his syndicate it was natural that he should ask me to write for his magazine.

One day as I was visiting him in his office, a loft on Lafayette Place, he suddenly said, in effect, "Garland, come in with us. Turn in some manuscript against stock in our concern. We'll make you rich". At this time he had as editor John Phillips, another mid-Westerner, and the head of his art department was an artist named Jaccaci, but their united capital was only a few thousand dollars. "Come in with us," he repeated, "and

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we'll make you rich. We can't afford to pay you what you ought to have for your material, but we'll pay part and give you stock in the magazine for the rest. We're going to build this into the biggest, livest periodical in the country and we'll make you one of the best-known writers in America."

It was really fine of McClure. He wanted me to share in his prosperity, but John Phillips, while sanguine, was less ready to guarantee success. He was the balance wheel of the engine, and I (being of no vision at all) could not see any room on the newsstands for another magazine, especially not for a magazine which was made up of reprints. I thanked McClure for his offer but declined to surrender the moderately sure income of my pen for that of a bundle of stock in a most audacious enterprise.

I was wrong and he was right. In two years he and John Phillips had made *McClure's* a national success, first by publishing serial novels by popular English novelists, and then by a most amazing venture, a serial *Life of Lincoln* by an almost unknown woman, Ida Tarbell. This piece of work was a direct outcome of McClure's belief in "human documents" in research. He made it possible for Miss Tarbell to travel anywhere she felt impelled to go in search of authentic records of Lincoln. She went down into Kentucky and out across Ohio and Illinois. She collected letters, court records, ambrotypes, prints and any other material which was needed to make her Lincoln authoritative. I doubt if McClure cared very much about its authenticity except as it made his magazine known to people as a bold and enterprising truth-dispenser. He was essentially the journalist. His *Life of Lincoln* was in the nature of a "scoop".

One day in January, 1896, as I was calling on McClure at his new office, in East Twenty-fifth Street, he suddenly said, "Garland, I want you to write a life of Grant to follow Miss Tarbell's *Lincoln*. We'll allow you a monthly salary, all your expenses in search of materials and a royalty on the book when it comes out".

I was not altogether surprised, for I had once said to him that Grant was the one man I could afford to write about, but I asked for a day or two to think it over. I had just published *Rose of Dutchers Coolly*, a novel of Wisconsin, and I was at work on a series of short stories of Colorado. To undertake a life of Grant would mean at least two years of hard work upon facts. My fiction would have to be set aside for the time, and I wondered if historical research might not dry up my fictional enthusiasms altogether.

The consideration which finally led me to undertake the work was the fact that Grant was a Western man, essentially of Illinois. Furthermore, he was my father's hero. His fine Scotch name rang like a deep-toned bell in my memory. Two of the noblest words in my childhood memory were Grant and Lincoln. I told McClure that I would undertake the task at once. "But I must do it in my own way," I warned him. "I have an idea of biography which is not that of most writers."

This idea, elaborated later, was substantially this; as Grant could not at any time have foreseen his future, I intended to picture him as if he were a fictional character, with no prevision of his ultimate success. I resolved to tell his story as it unrolled, never once saying "No one would have known", or "Who would have imagined that this man busily hauling wood into St. Louis would in three years command a million men?"—for to do so would be to give away my climax. Such a method is also false biography. Grant was in despair in 1860. He saw no way out and I resolved to treat of him so, just as if he were a character in a story.

This is quite different from "psychologizing" him. I resolved to present the facts, but to present them in their chronological order so that the story would march from one climax to another. I remember talking of this

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to Howells and receiving his approval of my idea, but McClure was not convinced. He wanted each instalment to be successful in itself, and when the readers wrote in to say, "Oh, why did you end your chapter with Grant so hopeless?" my editor saw it as a criticism, whereas to me it was a compliment. I had succeeded in making Ulysses Grant so real that some of my readers forgot his later triumphs and shared his hopeless days.

In March, in order that I might write of Grant's experiences in the Mexican war with more truth, I made a tour of its battlefields. Going in by way of Laredo I had several hours to wait before taking the train for Monterey, so I went over to the chief hotel to eat and to loaf. Wandering about the rotunda I discovered a door leading to a barroom. Pushing this open I walked in. Some eight or ten men were sitting at card tables, playing silently, listlessly, while the barkeeper leaned on a table and stared with gloomy abstraction. He brightened up as he saw me, but, as I ordered nothing, returned to the frowning silence in which I had first observed him.

After walking to the street-door and back, I took a seat near a mild-visaged elderly man and said, "What has happened here? Have you lost your mayor? Everybody seems to be in mourning".

"We are," replied the loafer, and after a little urging he explained. "You see," he said, "Laredo has held the cockroach championship for three years."

"The what?"

"Cockroach championship. Didn't you ever see a cockroach fight?"

"Never in my life. I didn't know they *could* fight."

"Fight like bulldogs—hang on and chew each others legs off. Well, last week San Antonio came down here with their roaches and cleaned up the town. Yes, sir! Took every dollar we had and that ain't the worst of it! The damned scoundrels had found some kind of paste that made their roaches savage as tigers, made 'em one third heavier than was natural and twice as fierce. They just *ate* our cockroaches. We didn't have a ghost of a show. We said, 'them cockroaches are imported', but they swore they weren't, and we only learnt what made 'em so powerful after San Antone took the train."

I tried not to smile. "Where did the battle take place?"

"Right here on that billiard table. You never see such a slaughter. It wasn't a fight, it was a *massycree.*"

I do not vouch for this tragic episode, but I have faithfully recorded the gloom of the city and have set down in brief the story of its humiliation. I hope the man was a liar, for his vivid picture of cockroaches "hanging on like bulldogs" was harrowing.

At Monterey, at Vera Cruz, at Mexico City, I found men and women who remembered Grant as a pleasant capable, young lieutenant, ready to turn his hand to any needed duty, and everywhere officials spoke of "Hayneral Grant" with affection, for he was a just man who understood and sympathized with Mexico. Some had visited him in the White House and they all praised his kindness and courtesy.

In my search of the records of Grant's youth, I went to Ohio, West Point, Sackett's Harbor, Detroit and St. Louis. For his early war record I dug up local newspapers and official records and then, with notebooks bulging with material, I returned to West Salem to be with my mother while I worked.

LII

Notwithstanding all the allurements of fictional themes, I kept at my history, travelling thousands of miles and interviewing hundreds of men and women who had known Grant or had met him. One of the most memorable of all my interviews was that with General Longstreet, Grant's classmate and one of the Chiefs of the Confederate Army, whom I found living in a little frame

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cabin on the outskirts of Gainesville, Georgia. I could scarcely credit my guide when he pointed out this small shack and said, "General Longstreet lives there".

Grant always spoke of Longstreet with affection and wrote of him with respect, not only as a great soldier but as a man of high character, and a friend. Longstreet was one of the first to give his allegiance to Grant and the North, and did what he could to rebuild the South in terms of the Union, with the result that he was almost completely ostracized by his own people. He sank from sight at this time, earning a scant living as a fruit grower. He was a tall man, slightly stooping and partly deaf, but he was a noble figure. In spite of his bare and ugly surroundings he contrived to make me feel the epic sweep of his own life as well as that of Grant's.

He took me out among his grapevines and fruit trees. He told me that the other end of his house was rented to a workman and his wife—"the woman helps me in my housekeeping". It was a pitiful story, an almost tragic situation for an essentially great man, and I walked away with a sense of wonder that so great a change could come into the life of a soldier so renowned. I found other officers of both armies living humbly and obscurely, but none as drearily as Longstreet.

While in Richmond, I called on Ellen Glasgow, the author of *The Descendant.* At that time I wrote, "I was surprised to find her a girl of twenty-three, tall and fair, with a childlike roundness of cheeks and chin, but her mind is very far from being childish. She has read Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin and has an alarming candor of statement. She frankly said, 'I don't like happy people. Happy people irritate me'. But she said it with a lovely smile. She showed me her poems—all dealing with the dignity of despair, the splendor of Hell and the stern decrees of God, singularly succinct and powerful of diction. The order of her progress seemed reversed. She is beginning with the bitterness of age. She is likely to be a marked personality in our literature. Her work will not be pleasant, but it will be original and powerful.

"Looked upon from conventional standpoints her writing is morbid and painful; perhaps from her standpoint it is quite natural and pleasurable. If this be true then she is doomed to unhappy contact with her fellows all the days of her life.

"She has charm of manner and is handsome. In conversation she seems a little ill at ease. She smiles much and her words are not always distinctive but she is an altogether different person in her writing. There she is masterly and unwavering".

I returned to New York just in time to attend a receiver's sale of the books of my publishers, Stone and Kimball, a rather melancholy event. Everything went absurdly low, as it always does at such a sale. For the most part the buyers were too ignorant to know the names of the writers and were there to buy any book at from three to five cents. It was not a cheerful scene.

Stedman said to Woodberry and myself, "If we could but contrive to have Kimball's *insouciance* put up at auction, we would all be paid in full".

Kimball smoked his pipe quite unmoved, apparently. It may have been only a brave show.

I was present, on October 6th, at a meeting of historic significance, the ratification of the several nominations of Henry George for Mayor of New York City. It was a marvellous convention. The audience came pouring in with thunderous steps, their faces tense with excitement. They could not wait for their idol to come forth. They stamped and called and, when he appeared, rose to meet him like a wave—a mass of shouting humanity, tossing arms and waving hats.

George, whom I had known so long and whom I had heard so many times, was at higher tension than I had ever seen him. On his face was the look of one who sees wide horizons and whose actions have to do

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with the welfare of the world. He looked twenty years older than when he stood on this same platform in 1886. His hair was gray and he wore spectacles. His face was thinner, but the line of his head was as noble as ever. The contour of his brow was superb.

When he spoke it was (as of old) with such simple directness that men forgot his voice and thought only of the words he uttered, sharing the emotion which appeared in the lines of his mobile face.

Such a speech was never heard before on a mayoralty platform. In a few words he lifted the campaign to a height from which the toiling millions of every nation could be seen. He spoke in behalf of the landless and disinherited of the whole earth.

On October 29, just at the close of the Mayoralty campaign which had become intensified into almost hysterical fervor, Henry George's heart gave out. He was stricken on the platform and died in a nearby hotel, thus bringing to a tragic end the race he had so gallantly made, knowing that death could not be far away. From face and voice during his acceptance speech I had received a premonition that this was his last campaign, and possibly his last year of life.

LIII

Some time during the spring of 1897 I was a guest at a luncheon given at the Players in honor of James M. Barrie who was in America on his wedding trip. Among the group were two young Americans who interested me but whom I had never met. One of these, Ernest Seton Thompson, a black-haired, black-eyed Canadian artist and hunter, was introduced to me as "Wolf Thompson", and the other was Theodore Roosevelt, Commissioner of Police for the city of New York, a young man of a lithe and powerful figure, who was said to be an authority on bears.

Barrie, a shy, small Scot, seemed to find me congenial, and after lunch invited me to a seat beside him on a sofa at one side of the room. I had read nearly every page of his writing and knew something of his amazing success in England. He told me that he was just off the boat and fresh from a reading of my latest novel. "My wife, who also read the book, would like to meet you," he said. As we talked we discovered many mutual friends and common interests.

My next meeting with Roosevelt was at a luncheon given to him by Brander Matthews. Howells was there and Owen Wister, whom I had never met but whose writings I had read with pleasure. He was a self-contained man, not unlike Roosevelt in physical bulk, sturdy, broad-shouldered, with a peculiarly firm clip of mouth. That he was a novelist of power and insight I knew, but I took satisfaction also in his competent manliness of bearing and tone.

Roosevelt, overflowing with ideas and experience, was plainly the biggest personality. He dominated the table. He was humorous, yet showed, at times, the deepest earnestness. He was considering an appointment to the position of Assistant Secretary of the Navy, which would mean a resignation of his Commissionership and a removal to Washington, but he was gay and delightfully comic in all his descriptions of his "cops". We were all glad to hear him talk, for such talk was not often heard in New York. Howells was especially interested in his stories, repeatedly urging him on by questions, and at the end said, "You must put these impressions into writing before they are overlaid by other experiences".

Roosevelt became serious. "I have no time to write," he said.

"All you need is a stenographer. We will be content with a record of such talk as you have given us today," Howells replied, and to this we all agreed.

Shortly after this I received a note from Roosevelt asking me to lunch with him at a bakery restaurant on Broadway, not far from Grace Church. He explained that he had only a short hour off duty and must go

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to the nearest place. On arrival at his table I found three other guests, William Chanler (a big-game hunter), Jacob Riis and Stephen Crane. Crane had won Roosevelt's admiration and friendly regard, although his way of life was repugnant to him. Riis, a Dane, was a newspaper man who had won distinction by his sympathetic work among the East Side poor.

Hardly had I taken my seat at Roosevelt's left, when he turned and said, "Your story of that fight at the brewery is capital. I like your Steve Nagel. He is like the men I know in the West".

Naturally I was pleased by this commendation. I knew of his Western experiences and of his interest in all things American, and to have him recall the name of a character in one of my books was highly flattering. My attention had been first drawn to him by a news note to the effect that he had purchased a piece of wild animal sculpture by my Chicago friend, Edward Kemeys. Just to show how things work out, it was Kemeys who first drew my attention to Seton Thompson's masterly drawing of wolves. We were a kind of intellectual brotherhood.

Roosevelt talked African hunting grounds with Chanler and of the need of East Side parks with Riis. Crane, for the most part, smoked in silence. I liked Riis, who was a short, round-faced, undistinguished-looking man in early middle life, but he said nothing that I can recall.

During lunch Roosevelt invited me to return with him to Headquarters and sit on the bench with him. "You can help me court-martial some of my 'cops'," he jovially remarked.

This invitation I gladly accepted, curious to see him in action as Commissioner. He was the whole board so far as jurisdiction went, and it so happened that he was the only judge in this court, but he was a just and kindly magistrate.

It was in the effort to raise the character of the service that he made frequent rounds of the city at night, meeting his men on their rounds, studying them at hours when they were disposed to forget discipline. At the close of his hour on the bench he invited me to join him on such a tour of observation. I gladly accepted and several nights later I met him at his office about ten o'clock.

Jacob Riis was there when I arrived, and at eleven Roosevelt, who was dressed in a rough dark suit, pulled a soft hat down over his spectacles and led the way into the street.

The streets were fairly dark and our path a devious one, winding in and out of the East Side tenement districts. To me the situation was more exciting than to Riis, whose life was largely spent in this region. It was a little like accompanying Grant on his rounds at Vicksburg.

Once Roosevelt accosted a loitering roundsman, "What are you doing here? Resume your beat!"

"Who the hell ——"

"I'm Commissioner Roosevelt," was the curt reply, and the officer stiffened into an attitude of alert attention.

Roosevelt went on. "I've been watching you for ten minutes. You're loafing. Get back to work or I'll put another man in your place."

The Commissioner's enemies called this playing to the gallery, but Roosevelt said, "How else can I know what the men are doing? This is the only way to test their service—catch 'em alone on their job."

LIV

Among the editors who most interested me and with whom I had most to do in the early 'nineties, was Richard Watson Gilder of the *Century Magazine,* a small, dark, low-voiced, thoughtful man. He was one of the busiest individuals of my acquaintance for he not only read and edited enormous masses of manuscript—and in those days much of it *was* manuscript—he also acted as director on many boards, presided at civic meetings and

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concerned himself with political affairs. I never saw him when he appeared at leisure.

He always carried a bag crammed with the work of aspiring writers like myself and read while on the train, even on the street cars. His editorial enthusiasm never faltered. He lived in the hope of finding a genius in his morning's mail. He was always kindly and tactful, with a cheerful light in his eyes and a quizzical smile on his lips. He never monologued, as Alden and Stedman were accustomed to do, and was entirely at ease on the platform. A true poet, he found time to write only an occasional verse of scholarly grace. He was the direct opposite of McClure, who was always in search of the timely news-story. Gilder desired fiction and poetry which would live long by reason of its significance and beauty. Beauty was his watchword. He realized, more clearly than any other of my advisors of that time, the ugliness of our life and the crudeness of our art, and he preached the need of literary grace with persistency and quiet power. His home on East Eleventh Street was a meeting place for music-lovers, poets, painters and other esthetic folk whose interests were congenial. It was a plain brick house with the usual double parlor and a delightful garden at the back. In this long room on the first floor his receptions and musicales were held. He took pleasure in maintaining a literary salon where interesting people of all kinds were invited and expected. The passing English critic, the Southern novelist, the Boston painter spending a few days in town, could usually be found there. If you were a regular guest you might even take a young friend along without the formality of asking permission. Howells, beloved as he was, never had such parties, but Stedman enjoyed being host. His salon was almost entirely literary. Gilder's touched life at many points. He enjoyed the presence of social reformers—if of the right temper—and musicians were especially welcome. Like Howells he tempted his guests to talk, and often went so far as to have one of them address the meeting on some ethical or esthetic subject.

(*To be continued*)

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PSEUDONYMS AND SOBRIQUETS

by Annie Russell Marble

LIFE and literature today are so complex, so dominated by many kinds of activities and subtle "streams of consciousness", that we are more than ever convinced of dual or triple personalities. It may find expression in a latent craving for freedom, like that poetized by Fannie Stearns Davis in *Myself and I*, or it may take a more startling form akin to the conflict between Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. William J. Locke, in *The Morals of Marcus Ordeyne*, has a timely word on this subject: "Hasn't a phase of the duality of our natures ever struck you? We have a primary or everyday nature—a thing of habit, tradition, circumstances; and we have a secondary nature which clamors for varied sensations and is quite contented with vicarious gratification. There are delicately fibred novelists who satisfy a sort of secondary Berserkism by writing books whose pages reek with bloodshed. In the same way predestined spinsters obtain vicarious enjoyment of the tender passion by reading highly-coloured love-stories".

Even in this era of revolt against inhibitions it is not always wise or politic to acknowledge one's vagrant self. To save embarrassment, or more drastic consequences, masks are donned in life and writing—witness the "Charles Egbert Craddock", "Henry Seton Merriman", "O. Henry" of the past, and the "Iconoclast", "Max O'Rell", "Saul Kane", "Clemence Dane" and "Michael Strange" of the present. Examples of certain novelists who "satisfy a sort of secondary Berserkism by writing books whose pages reek with bloodshed" are found in a list of distinctive writers of mystery and detective stories given by Willard Huntington Wright in the introduction to *Great Detective Stories* —Lynn Brock and his Colonel Gore, Bennet Copplestone, Charles Barry and Frank Heller. Hidden behind these pseudonyms are the real names of Anthony Wharton (who writes both as "Lynn Brock" and "Alister McAllister"), Frederick Harcourt Kitchin, Charles Bryson and the Scandinavian novelist, Gunnar Serner. Mr. Wright's own disguise as "S. S. Van Dine" is familiar current history.

More often the motive for taking a pseudonym is positive rather than negative, to challenge rather than to hide. One of the sure ways to awaken passing interest is to mystify and whet the curiosity of the reading-public. Had *Sketches of London* been announced as the work of Charles Dickens, reporter in the Houses of Parliament, they would have failed utterly to waken the widespread interest that was roused by the mysterious author "Boz". This pen-name, which was a nickname for a younger brother in the Dickens household, clung to Dickens throughout his years as writer, reader and social lion. Memories of "Boz, the humorist and showman", cluster about his last home, Gad's Hill. Two years ago the head-mistress of the girls' school, which was located in

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this picturesque house, graciously showed memorials in every room, including those "fake books" with droll titles, designed by "Boz" to trick his visitors—"Cats' Lives" in nine volumes, "Religion of Henry VIII" in four volumes, and other travesties.

In many instances pseudonyms have a temporary use; in other cases they become, in truth, a dual nature as strong as that of the individual. William Sharp merged his identity, as poet and romancer, in the mysterious "Fiona Macleod". He wrote letters for her, answered marriage proposals, cited "her" criticism of contemporary authors and declared that if this secret, which was kept for more than a decade, should be divulged, his own inspiration would die: "I can write out of my heart in a way I could not do as William Sharp and indeed I could not do so if I were the woman Fiona Macleod is supposed to be, unless veiled in scrupulous anonymity". Vital is the cleavage between Ray Stannard Baker, writer of economic and biographical volumes, and "David Grayson", the expression of his dual personality. When he was seeking a mask for the author of the easeful, refreshing *Adventures in Contentment*, he remembered "a name that I heard once in the South"—he explains—and so adapted it to this form of his writing. For ten years the disguise was known only to his family and Walter Hines Page. The secret might have been kept much longer had not an imposter, in another David Grayson, appeared (as had happened to George Eliot and other writers in disguise), and the identity had to be revealed.

As one follows research among these pseudonyms the query comes, Why are not the pen-names copyrighted, like the books by their authors? Such action would save many complications and prevent wilful misinterpretation. It is difficult to know whether "Allan Grant" is the pseudonym for Arthur Howden Smith or the real name of the writer who used several disguises. Recently there has been confusion over the pseudonym of "Ephesian". Frederick Edwin Smith, first earl of Birkenhead, used the name, in symbolic meaning, for certain treatises on international law and other themes. Two years ago, in the revival of interest in Dickens, appeared a novelized biography entitled *This Side Idolatry*, which created rabid discussion among the Dickens admirers. The author's name on the title-page was "Ephesian". Not the earl of Birkenhead, however, was *this* "Ephesian", but Carl Eric Bechhofer Roberts, who has written, also, a challenging biography of Winston Churchill, the statesman.

Charlotte Brontë, cautiously hiding her authorship and that of her sisters under the masks of Currer Bell, Ellis Bell and Acton Bell, was compelled to take her London publishers into her confidence because an imposter claimed to be the Currer Bell of these Yorkshire tales; moreover, she was obliged to entice Anne to go with her to London to prove that all the three names did not belong to one personality. She dared not suggest that Emily, the mystic and poet, should know of this confusion—or even that the secret was divulged. "Dear, gentle Anne" would yield more easily to the program necessitated by the manager of the family, Charlotte. (With memories of the gentle, lovable qualities of Anne and that she had died, in that fateful year of three deaths in the household, at Scarborough where she was seeking cure for her lung infection, we located her burial-stone recently in the old cemetery of St. Mary's Parish Church, near the Castle. Just inside the fence is the grave of "Acton Bell", with this inscription on the stone: "Here lie the remains of Anne Brontë, Daughter of the Rev. P. Brontë, incumbent of Haworth, Yorkshire. She died, aged 28, May 28, 1849". Lying asleep on the flat part of this grave-stone was a *living lamb*—for a flock of sheep was in the enclosure to keep the grass cropped—sleeping soundly on the grave of "dear, gentle Anne Brontë".)

Many pseudonyms are chosen for their significance and aptness; others are selected for

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harmonious sound. In the first class are such familiar phrases as those chosen by the Queen Anne wits—"Bickerstaff" and "Clio", "A Dissenter" and "The Spectator", or, in later days, "I Playfair", as one of Oscar Wilde's disguises, "Searchlight" for Waldo Frank or "The Gentleman with a Duster" for Harold Begbie's political revealings. With more friendly attitude "Rusticus" has narrated his rural pleasures—the pen-name of Frederick Denison Maurice of the earlier generation and of MacGregor Jenkins of our own day.

Nixon Waterman, writer of lyrics and ballads of humor and wistfulness, used "Peter Martin" as a temporary pen-name. He thus explains in a personal letter: "Yes, one year I had charge of the editorial page of the *Boston Traveler* and the fellows on the paper, knowing I went in heavy on gardening, bored the life out of me asking why their flowers didn't bloom or their vegetables produce. It was suggested that I start a department called 'How does your garden grow?' and I took the name 'Peter Martin'. The department attracted the attention of the Page Company and they paid me to write *A Little Gardening Book for a Little Girl*, the first of a series which bore the name of 'Peter Martin' ".

For some occult reason "Peter" seems to have been always a favorite name for portions of pseudonyms. "Peter Grievous, Esq." was the chosen mask for Francis Hopkinson, Revolutionary satirist and signer of the Constitution, when he wrote his trenchant political allegory, *A Pretty Story in the Year of Our Lord, 1774*—which was later reprinted as *The Old Farm and the New Farm*. Even more familiar in memory are "Peter Pindar", or John Wolcott, English doctor-satirist, "Peter Parley", or Samuel G. Goodrich, one of America's pioneer writers of educational juveniles, and that associate of Joseph Dennie, "The Lay Preacher", whom he called "pointed, pithy, pretty Peter Quince"; his true name was Isaac Story. "Peter Porcupine" was a suggestive name for William Cobbett; J. G. Lockhart sometimes wrote as "Peter Morris" and Sydney Smith as "Peter Plymley". Significance and poetic sound are well mingled in "Carmen Sylva", the pseudonym chosen by Elizabeth, Queen of Roumania, for her songs and ballads of the soil, so delightfully translated by the American poet of untimely death, John Eliot Bowen. "Barry Cornwall" and "Owen Meredith" are pleasant to the ear, well adapted to the romantic poets whose legal names of Bryan Waller Procter and Lord Lytton are far less familiar. George W. Russell explains his mystical pen-name, Æ, thus: he signed his poems, "Aeon", because of the immutability of some of the themes, but the printer could not decipher his handwriting beyond the first two letters, so Æ resulted. I believe it was Robert Cortes Holliday (whose literary disguise is "Murray Hill") who answered the inquiry "Why does Mr. Russell call himself Æ?" by saying, "Because he does not wish to be known as *I.O.U.*"

Humorists have shown inventiveness and dramatic sense in their chosen pseudonyms from the days of "Mark Twain" and "Artemus Ward" to those of present writers of travesty like "Walter Traprock", or George Shepard Chappell, "John Riddell", or Corey Ford, and the English "Saki", or Hector Hugh Munro.

More mysterious and tragic than any fiction is the life-story of Ambrose Bierce, "Bitter Bierce", as a biographer, C. Hartley Grattan, has called him. It was as "Dod Grile" that he began his writing, fables in verse, contributed to London *Fun* and Tom Hood's *Comic Annual*. Many of the extravaganzas among humorists' pen-names were echoes of Thackeray, Scott and Irving—"Michael Angelo Titmarsh", "Charles J. Yellowplush", "Jebediah Cleisbotham", "Malachi Mailings", "Jonathan Oldstyle" and "Deidrich Knickerbocker".

French literature abounds in interesting disguises. The strongest influence upon letters in the eighteenth and nineteenth century was Voltaire. When and why François

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Marie Arouet took the pseudonym of "Voltaire" is still a mystery, but he was using it in 1718, soon after the successful performance of *Œdipe*. Whatever he wrote, in the Bastille as political prisoner and afterwards, in history, biography, satire or humor, he was "Voltaire". His influence may be traced in several French writers with fictitious names—"Prosper Mérimée", or Thibault C. Gazul, "Stendhal", or Henri-Marie Beyle, "Anatole France", who sifted out and added to his own name, Jacques Anatole Thibault. To her association with Jules Sandeau, in one of her first *affaires*, George Sand was indebted for her first mask, Jules, later changed to George Sand. "Ouida" was a name to conjure with in the last generation. Many were the apocryphal stories connected with the personality of Louise de la Ramée, whose real name was forgotten in her pseudonym, which was the approximation of her own childish pronunciation of "Louise".

"Pierre Loti", or Captain Louis Marie Julien Viaud, was given his poetic pseudonym, a name suggestive of the glamorous Indian flower and well suited to his exotic tales of land and sea, by his admirers. In current French literature André Maurois's pen-name is far more intriguing than his legal name, Emile Herzog.

Literary disguises may reveal not alone a dual personality but a triple or even quadruple nature, expressed by varied pseudonyms for different types of writing. Notable examples of the past were Defoe and Dean Swift. The former might sign himself "Andrew Moreton, Merchant", or "An Eye Witness", or "T. Taylor"; the latter wrote as "A Dissenter", "A Person of Honour", "A Person of Quality" and "Lemuel Gulliver". Later examples of manifold disguises were furnished by Isabel Ostrander and Oswald Crawford. The latter was most prolific, varying his names according to his writings—"Archibald Banks", "Alex Freke Turner", "John Dangerfield", "Joseph Strange", "George Windle Sandys" and "John Latouche". In the preface to *Country House Essays*, in 1885, signed by "John Latouche", he questions the propriety of using disguises and says: "It is, perhaps, something of an impertinence for an author to use a feigned name at all. Only a man's modesty, or his fear of the possible fierceness of critics, can excuse it, but if it is not very respectful to readers to appear under one disguise it is certainly an impertinence to use several, and to drop one of them is to return to that attitude of deference which is proper from author to reader".

Triple personality today suggests Mrs. L. Adams Beck, who writes philosophic studies under her own name, romances with glamorous settings as "Louis Moresby", and a long series of fictionized biographies as "E. Barrington". In a personal note she says: "I chose 'Louis Moresby' as pseudonym because two of my names—I have a good many!—are Louise Moresby. As to 'E. Barrington', I wanted the initials, 'E. B.' because two of my names have those initials".

Frequently an author will first address the public under an assumed name to test his or her ability and how much response may be expected from readers. When recognition comes the mask is generally dropped. This was true of Thackeray and his whimsical pseudonyms, in contrast with Dickens and his long-sustained "Boz". In the bibliography of John Galsworthy one finds "John Sinjohn" as the name over which he wrote his first three novels, *Jocelyn*, *Villa Rubein* and *A Man of Devon*. The last appeared in 1901; three years later he revealed his identity and real name in the book that gave him classification as a social ironist, *The Island Pharisees*. D. H. Lawrence transferred the letters of his name and signed himself "Lawrence H. Dawson". *The Journal of Arthur Stirling* gave Upton Sinclair an earlier pen-name. More recently Jeffrey Eardley Marston has chosen to write "Jeffrey E. Jeffrey" as the author of post-war novels, *The Breaking-Point* and *The Longest Shadow*.

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Two photographers of New England in fiction wrote at first with pseudonyms—Sarah Orne Jewett as "Alice Eliot" and Alice Brown as "Martin Redfield". The latter thus explains her first mask, in reply to our question; "The publishers told me I would have much better sale for my first novel if I took a man's name, so I chose one with virile sounds". Winnifred Babcock used the picturesque pen-name of "Onoto Watanna" for her tales of Japan, *Miss Mimi of Japan*, *The Wooing of Wistan* and *A Japanese Nightingale*. Who collaborated with Helen Hunt Jackson, if she was one of the authors of *Saxe Holm's Stories*? Persistent reports declared that this woman who wrote poems as "H.H." and studies of Indian life and the classic romance, *Ramona*, in her own full name, was author of several of the finished short stories in these two volumes; but their publishers, Charles Scribners' Sons, even in this current year, are restrained from divulging the authorship. In a list of "Fictitious and Pseudonymous Names", appended to Mark Meredith's *Who's Who in Literature*, the name of Miss Rush Ellis is given against the identity of "Saxe Holm". Is there disproof or verification? Was there an English "Saxe Holm" as well as an American?

Like Alice Brown, many other women have taken men's names in their ventures in fiction. Sometimes the mask falls off quickly; in other instances it becomes a literary identity—like "Frank Danby" (Mrs. Julia Frankau), "John Strange Winter" (Mrs. Arthur Stannard), and "John Oliver Hobbes" (Mrs. Pearl Craigie). No indication of the sex is suggested by "Maxwell Grey" (Mary Gleed Tuttiet), "J. E. Buckrose" (Mrs. Annie E. F. Jameson), or "Touchwood", the unique disguise of Katherine Minta Garner of Newark, England, writer of topical songs, ballads and plays.

Sometimes a real name sounds so like a pseudonym that the reader is skeptical when told it is reality and not myth. Jerome K. Jerome was an example; the author's full name was Jerome Klapka Jerome. His name fitted the earlier, popular books of humoristic trend. Mr. Jerome stressed his difficulty in convincing the public that he was not always a humorist, writing *Three Men in a Boat*, and he said that there were angry reactions from disappointed readers of his religious allegory, *The Passing of the Third Floor Back*. This reminiscence of the author recalled a personal experience when present at a performance of this play in New York—and the indignant protests of an over-dressed, under-educated theatre-party, who came to laugh and remained (for only a part of the scenes) to denounce and scoff. Larry Barretto, the novelist, has a name, as he has said, that requires no manipulation to become effective and euphonious but he has used "Lawrence Frederick Brevoort" as a screen in certain writings.

"Clemence Dane", dramatist and novelist, so fully merged herself in her pen-name that one forgets she is Winifred Ashton, answers the question of my "Why?": "Just chance! I was talking with a friend about the type of name that I thought effective for a pseudonym—and instanced 'Bow Bells', 'St. Mary Axe', 'St. Clement Dane (city churches and names that I knew) and so, in a flash, arrived my own umbrella".

Pseudonyms and sobriquets are sometimes confused, both in meaning and use. The former are chosen by the author, or *for* the author, and are signatures, generally, on title-pages. Sobriquets, on the other hand, are *applied to* authors by readers or others and remain as analogous terms when reference is made to the writers. Burns was known as "The Ayrshire poet" and James Hogg as "The Ettrick Shepherd". Ebenezer Elliott, by his political writings, was called "The Corn-Law Rhymer" and Izaak Walton won for himself the title of "The Compleat Angler". Benjamin Franklin never outlived the friendly sobriquet of "Poor Richard". Whittier was often called "The Quaker Poet"—so was Bernard Barton, who gave himself this title.

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Carlyle was often identified with his character, Teufelsdröckh; Oliver Wendell Holmes was denominated "The Autocrat". "Israfel", as a symbolic self-name for Poe, has been revived in latter-day biographies of the poet.

Sappho was born in the latter part of the seventh century B.C. There has even been more myth and surmise than knowledge of this "Lesbian muse" whose features have been immortalized on coins and busts. Through the centuries ardent admirers have found many "a second Sappho". Katharine Philips, of the mid-seventeenth century, was acclaimed as the "English Sappho", although she had a sentimental sobriquet of her own, "The Matchless Orinda". She was an earnest student of French poetry and drama. Another "English Sappho" was "L.E.L.", or Letitia Elizabeth Landon. She seems to have belonged to a good family, but to have had a vain, restless spirit with too great ease in rhyming. The same sobriquet was used of "Violet Fane", or Lady Montgomerie Currie, poet, novelist and essayist of the last half of the nineteenth century; her poems, "Afterwards" and "In Green Old Gardens" are included in Burton E. Stevenson's collection.

There have been many "second Elias", both in England and America. Critics applied the name to Irving and Lowell, to Donald G. Mitchell and Charles Dudley Warner. Kinship was not lacking, in spite of such different personalities, between "the genial Elia" and "Ik Marvel" of the sentimental, friendly *Reveries of a Bachelor* and *Dream Life*. Donald G. Mitchell loved humanity even better than did Charles Lamb, whose life was so beset by emotional tragedies but warmed by loyal friendships. In a personal letter of acknowledgment of an article on "The Charm of Ik Marvel", Mr. Mitchell wrote to me: "More especially am I gratified by your kindly mention of the humane and companionable side of the writings on which you comment—which mention is, to me, more welcome than the most favorable critical estimate of literary form".

Although Joseph Dennie signed himself "Oliver Oldschool, Esq." when he edited *The Port Folio* of Philadelphia, he was called—and is remembered—by his sobriquet of "The Lay Preacher", from the title of the "Sermons" that he wrote for the *Farmer's Weekly Museum* of Walpole, New Hampshire, later collected in book form. "The Learned Blacksmith" are words even more familiar than Elihu Burritt, to whom they were applied. By his broad linguistic studies and his effective writings in behalf of universal peace, he gained international reputation.

Richard J. Blackmore delighted to tell his friends that, in *his* neighborhood, it would be useless to ask for him as "the author of *Lorna Doone*—because he was everywhere known in Dartmoor as "The Market-Gardener". Sherlock Holmes seemed so essentially real, in the earlier stories by Sir Conan Doyle, that the author spent much time answering inquiries about this personality, addressed to him with the name of his character as sobriquet. By young and old alike the name of Joel Chandler Harris is loved and remembered as "Uncle Remus", just as the identity of Hugh Lofting is lost in the tales of "Dr. Dolittle", with their blending of animal lore, folk tales and sympathetic humor.

Who was "Paul Fort", who contributed fables, sketches and brief stories, usually with European setting, to *St. Nicholas* from 1873 to 1882? This name appears in the index against a score or more of titles. They varied in form but all were pithy and entertaining, from "Fanny Hopper's Choice" and "Wonderful River", in November and December, 1873, to "Ludovick's Rocks", "The Mysterious Barrel" and "Story of the Secretary Bird" in 1882. It has been asserted that Frank Stockton was masking his identity under this pseudonym, while, in his own name he was writing for the same magazine during these years, forty-five stories and sketches, among them the serials, "Personally Conducted", "The Story of Viteau" and "What Might Have Been Expected". Perhaps because of

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revived interest in Paul Fort, the French poet, born in 1872 in Rheims, and author of war-poems and later symbolic verse (duly honored in Europe and by Amy Lowell here), attention has again been called to this pen-name of Stockton.

A challenging suggestion by Mrs. May Lamberton Becker sent the author of this paper on a quest among libraries and correspondence with Mrs. W. A. MacAllister of Westfield, New Jersey, niece of Frank Stockton. From the latter source came gracious response regarding the probable reason for the choice of this mask: "My father's name was Paul, and Uncle Frank always had a liking for the name. Fort was a name running through a branch of the Evans family in the south and Fort Evans was Aunt Marian's (Mrs. Frank Stockton) cousin".* Frank Stockton was the assistant editor of *St. Nicholas* while the "Paul Fort" writings appeared there. Mrs. Mary Mapes Dodge was its editor for thirty years. Research has proved that she wrote, under her own name, verses and those charming tales, *Donald and Dorothy* and *Hans Brinker; or The Silver Skates* and, at the same time, contributed whimsical verses with titles like "The Eight-Day Clock" and "Santa Claus' Messenger Boy" to the magazine as "Joel Stacy" or "J. S. Stacy".† Doubtless, for economic reasons and to win readers for their juvenile magazine, these editors did double work through their "dual personalities".

* In a personal letter to the author.

† *A Golden Age of Authors* by William W. Ellsworth, 1919.

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CHRONICLE AND COMMENT

WHERE YOUTH IS TURNING.—Youth is rebellious, heretical, revolutionary. Youth loves to hearken to voices that speak out in opposition to the age and that bid youth gird up its loins for a fight in which victory is distant and uncertain, and in which difficulty, ridicule and martyrdom are more certain attendants. That is why so many young men and young women are turning with enthusiasm to the two most revolutionary men in America, now that the scorn and silence that so long enveloped them have been in some measure penetrated and the nature of their work has begun to be generally understood.

The two most revolutionary men in America, oddly enough, are quiet dignified dwellers in college towns, full of years and academic honors; one rounding out thirty-five years of teaching and productive scholarship at Harvard, the other retired from journalism to the pursuit of literature and philosophy, with some teaching, at Princeton. Compared with the unorthodoxies of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More, the vaunted heresies of such popular modern rebels as Nietzsche, Ibsen, France, as Huxley, Butler, Shaw, Wells, Ellis, Russell, Dewey, Mencken, are but as a gentle drifting with the stream.

For Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More have not merely caught up some of the innumerable floating rebellions of a disordered age and noisily carried them to a temporary popular success. What they have done is nothing less than to set themselves against the main directions of Western thought since the eighteenth century, in some respects since the Renaissance, and have brought in opposition to these currents a body of positive doctrines that run violently counter to them. They have examined minutely the whole modern movement, and have pronounced it to be proceeding away from civilization rather than toward it. They have concluded that the modern world has gone wrong on first principles, and have prescribed principles that must be adopted instead.

It is the magnitude of their purposes, and the massive strength with which they have pursued them, that account for the bitterness of the hostility that has beset their careers from the beginning and is now being renewed with redoubled vigor as their views are being thrown into general discussion. For to secede from one's own age has its costs. One of the costs is to deserve the epithet fool, or at best the charge of being irrelevant, if one is merely being driven by bewilderment and dismay to flee from one's time to some haven of refuge in the past, or if one has elected Canute one's king and impotently and petulantly bids the tide roll back and the clock reverse itself, or if one is afflicted so severely with academic timidity as to be hostile to the vital forces of one's day and dependent on the sanction of years in yielding approval. Of course these charges have been brought against More and Babbitt, and often will be again. But even the uninformed observer can deduce how little they apply from the very ferocity of the opposition—from the very tones in which these charges (and how many others!) are made. For one does not bring up heavy siege guns and invent new poison gases for the purpose of disposing of fugitive weaklings. And the informed observer—one, that is, who has read the books of the two men, however little he may be convinced by them—knows even better that they cannot thus be lightly dismissed.

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Plenty before them have cried out against the age. It has had a host of critics since its inception who have raised their voices with increasing clamor until in the years since the war the cries of disillusion and despair have become a continuous roar. But never before has the modern era been submitted to a critique so drastic, so sweeping, so radical as in the works of More and Babbitt. It is the kind of criticism that can only result in a battle to the death: either they have in their work destroyed the modern world, or their criticism must itself be destroyed by an answer far more cogent than any that has yet been even attempted. The key to the present controversy and the present movement lies in the rapidly increasing number of keen minds who are concluding that their criticism is unanswerable.

What is the evidence, it may well be asked, on which these sweeping generalizations and excited superlatives are based? To present the evidence would mean copying the score of closely reasoned and closely written volumes into which during a quarter of a century the proof has been abundantly packed. To present their case in a few paragraphs, or even in a book, is impossible, and even to attempt to show the general direction of their thought and adduce examples is bound to be in some degree a misrepresentation. What, then, are their conclusions, assuming that their diagnosis may be correct? What do they offer instead? But here again an attempt at abridgment would be worse than useless, because taken in isolation their conclusions, their recommendations, their doctrines, are unrevealing to the point of misrepresentation—and uninteresting to the point of triteness. For the whole point of their work is that the only possible conclusions on all the important questions are the oldest conclusions in the world, the commonplace observations about human nature that are found in every great ethical, philosophical and religious leader and have been embedded in the traditions of the race.

The value of the work of More and Babbitt lies not in the novelty of their conclusions, but in the power with which they have analyzed the whole modern movement in the light of them. Their work is not a set of doctrines, but a profound examination of the modern spirit from the viewpoint of traditional wisdom. The value of their work lies in the power of dialectic, the subtlety of reasoning, the keenness of perception, the breadth of comprehension, the range of learning, the wealth of illustration, the clarity, the eloquence, the wit, the passion which have gone into their examination and its recording. Armed with the wisdom of the past, they have studied minutely the whole course of our times, have insinuated themselves into every twist and turn of the modern spirit, and have judged it. They find it wanting; but they make inescapably clear their reasons, and they indicate equally emphatically their solutions.

A way of indicating the significance of More and Babbitt is to say that they have demonstrated that now, for the first time in a hundred and fifty years—for the first time, say, since Johnson and Burke—it is possible for supreme critical intelligences to be also upholders of traditional wisdom; for a first-rate mind to be also well-balanced. When the forces of expansion and disruption which had risen at the Renaissance broke through the temporary dam of the eighteenth century, they carried all before them and produced in the nineteenth century an era rich in peripheral development but unsound at the center. The result was that to be capable of expressing the age in literature meant, almost automatically, to be eccentric; the great man's very power to interpret his own time made him subject to its sway; only the little minds could be sane.

Throughout the last century, when some poor little critic who yet was a reasonable man expostulated with some great writer for his vagaries, the writer's partisans could effectively reply, "What a stuffy old gent he

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is. Why he can't write, and his learning is small, and he obviously can't understand what our hero is talking about, but instead is merely shocked and scared because of his priggish upbringing and his academic past. Just compare his dull sermons with the great vital uprush he is trying to stopper!" And it would have been true. Even the best critical minds of the century were only sometimes able to see through the monstrosities thriving around them and oppose them effectively. Even Goethe, even Emerson, even Arnold, even Sainte-Beuve were caught in the conflicting currents of their time and were unable to win through to the deepest insight. The century, for all its tremendous peripheral richness, its unprecedented intellectual and emotional achievement (science, that is to say, and the romantic movement), was short in wisdom. There were probably more literary geniuses who were also fools in the nineteenth century than in all the rest of recorded history. The dissociation between great literary ability and ordinary sense was so marked that genius has come to be popularly associated not merely with eccentricity in temperament but with eccentricity in vision of life.

The reader of Babbitt and More is hesitant at first to accept the evidence of his senses and to believe that someone writing in his own day, and in his own language, and even in his own country, should have seen deeper into the modern era than the earlier great names who likewise brought supreme qualities to the task. When he finally brings himself to admit it, he realizes that in excelling the great critical intelligences of the past century and a half in wisdom and insight—not in learning, not in literary gifts, not in richness and charm of personality, though here they are frequently their great precedessors' equals—they have established exactly what they contend: that the modern era is bankrupt and is coming to a close. By merely occurring they have proved it, and by putting themselves into print they have delivered the age its death blow. For to see an era in history from the outside, when the era is so gravely one-sided that it cannot thus long continue, is to accomplish most of the work of correction and to announce a new period.

Not, of course, that modernism will immediately die. It will resist stubbornly, and its defeat will call for strenuous efforts and hard sacrifice during years. The righting of the balance will be difficult, but it is not so hopeless as it sounds. For, after all, most people are reasonably well-balanced, and even the leaders of a lop-sided era are likely to be sound enough most of the day. It is a matter of shift in proportion and emphasis among a few thousand individuals—a difficult shift to make, but not hopeless. It is for this reason that their work is a call to arms as well as a cry to heaven, a promise as well as a challenge. They condemn the immediate past, and they find guidance in the distant past, but it is for the future that they are working and in the future that their work will bear fruit.

THE NEW HUMANISTS.—There are two ways in which one can successfully oppose our age:

1. By accepting the critical, experimental bases of the modern world so thoroughly and by carrying out their implications so completely as to be able to demonstrate to the champions of modernism that on their own premises and by their own methods they are fatally wrong; or

2. By going on from the preceding position to a rejection of the modern bases and a return to the bases of the past.

The modern world is now being violently assaulted from both of these positions. The two methods are identical in most respects, since they unite in their onslaught on contemporary fallacies and in their insistence on a restoration of some ancient truths of human nature. In secular matters, that is to say, the two are at one, differing only in some ultimate philosophical and religious questions. In this country their joint campaign has come to be known by the name of

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humanism; its champions are "the new humanists". Of the two leaders of the humanists, Irving Babbitt stands in the first of the two divisions in approach mentioned above, that of complete scepticism toward all revealed religion; Paul Elmer More, as he has made clear in his books and says again in this issue of THE BOOKMAN, began his career thus, but has come in recent years to feel also the necessity of religion. Humanism proper, it cannot be too emphatically pointed out, is primarily a secular movement, and here the leaders of the movement as well as their allies and followers are united, their differences in approach serving to strengthen their position immeasurably—enabling them, as it were, to catch the modernists going and coming.

It should be remembered that the direction of thought conveniently referred to as the new humanism is not exclusively an American movement. On the contrary its most conspicuous feature is its close relation to similar tendencies in all the countries of Europe. Particularly in France, the ancient battleground of our civilization, where all the important issues come quickly to the front and receive the sharpest debate, has it become apparent that the fundamental assumptions of recent generations are under withering fire. At the same time, America's peculiar position in Western civilization must be borne in mind. Those who try to explain American culture in terms of what *new* elements America has contributed are clearly on the wrong track. The simple truth is that America is only Europe with certain elements left out —*not* added. That is to say, American culture was established at a time when the principal traditions of Europe were in a weakened condition; the immigrants were largely representatives of the anti-traditional tendencies. It is this that has given America the appearance of being in the van of Western civilization, since the breakdown of tradition has been until recently the dominant trend in Europe: America naturally went much further along the road, having nothing to restrain her.

But now the tide has begun to turn the other way in Europe; slowly, to be sure, and doubtless more or less feebly for some time to come. But not only in France, where the phenomenon is nearly a generation old, but all over Europe, the tell-tale sign has been appearing: the keen young men are responding in numbers to the call of authority, tradition and order. If the movement is slow in Europe, where so many institutions, customs and memories bind the past to the present, a similar movement might well be thought hopeless in this country, where the break with the past has been so complete and where the fruits of modernity in the shape of commercial and scientific achievement have been so abundant. It might seem that America, leading civilization as long as the trend was "modern", would quickly be left far behind in the growing insistence on recovering the past and making the present over in the light of it.

It is just here that the international significance of Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt can be appreciated. A cultural movement depends, finally, on leaders. And the very extremes to which circumstances led this country in carrying out the modern program have resulted in a quite logical reversal: America finds herself equipped with the ablest leaders of any country in our civilization. France has produced extremely able men of wide influence—notably Jacques Maritain and Charles Maurras—but at the crucial moment of the turning of the tide it would seem that there are disadvantages in being part of a still strongly traditional country. It is as yet impossible for a Frenchman to see the whole modern movement from the outside, as it has been the distinction of Babbitt and More to do. The result is that France sees the excesses of Maurras and the brilliant but somewhat anomalous career of Maritain. Nor has England, to set beside such dazzling and effective champions of or-

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hodoxy as Chesterton and Belloc, yet produced any figure of the stature and authority of the two Americans. In other words, for the first time in our history we have pulled ahead of the mother country in a prime intellectual field.

This is not the place to recount the careers of Paul Elmer More and Irving Babbitt, or to trace in any detail the ideas with which they have been concerned as devastating analysts and implacable opponents; but some few remarks may be necessary. There is drama born of a courage and a determination rare in our day in the steadfastness with which, in the face of obloquy, ridicule, misunderstanding and wilful misrepresentation, they quietly continued to work out the implications of their insight in volume after volume of solid fact and no less solid reasoning. Some forty years ago, when hardly more than students, they looked about them and saw clearly the nature of the excesses which had finally been allowed to pervert the great release and enlargement of the human spirit which, rising at the Renaissance, had burst all bounds after the temporary and artificial equilibrium achieved in the eighteenth century. They saw that the magnificent intellectual adventuring which had yielded the glories of science had in the end cut loose from its moorings and in the arrogance of its fame was pretending to authority in realms where its methods cannot be made to apply, in defiance of good sense and in subversion of good living. They saw that the unparalleled emotional adventuring which had brought so much novel beauty and delight into the world had likewise cut itself off from fundamentals until the prevailing state of the modern mind, as reflected both in literature and in life, was a violent oscillation between utopian dreaming and frenzied lashing, between idyllic revery taken as philosophy and sordid grovelling taken as reality, between leagues for peace and Armageddons, between Wellses and Zolas, between overweening hope and black despair.

They saw also that the unbridled arrogance born of science and the unbridled dreaming born of romanticism had united to form the most conceited and pernicious notion evolved by man, the idea of progress: the idea that through increase of knowledge and spread of education mankind was on its way to a paradise or at least to some vastly better condition—an idea that has somewhat lost standing in recent years but still persists in the background of much of our thinking (the confidence in science, in legislation, in popular education, in the socialization of industry). They saw, finally, what was the reason for this widespread conviction that the vast and dazzling superficial novelty of the modern world had somehow ushered in a new era for mankind in which the traditions of the past were irrelevant: they saw that after the break-up of the medieval world the essentially human spirit, the part of man that brings order out of chaos and that works for life against dissolution and death, had suffered blow after blow until it was almost inoperative and seemed in danger of disappearing utterly. They saw that what was needed was a new humanism, a fresh assertion of human values and in their name an assault on the rampant modern imitations of wisdom which speak loudly the language of human dignity but have let the thing itself drop out.

The rest of their careers has consisted in their efforts to contribute their share to the structure of the new humanism. They brought to the task supreme qualities of intellect and literary skill; they armed themselves with a prodigious learning slowly assimilated, neither man beginning serious publication until he was forty. If they did not quickly influence many to their way of thinking, it did not mean that their powers went unnoticed. Mr. More, indeed, for some years spoke from the platform of the most distinguished weekly in the country, and Professor Babbitt has influenced thousands of Harvard students through his classes. But

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their principal work went into volumes which only with extreme slowness found their way to the public. This was, in large part, inevitable, because of the close-packed thought and unconcealed learning. But on the other hand it is surprising that the books were not carried further, in spite of the uncongenial ideas, by the distinction of their form. More uses doubtless the finest critical prose ever written in America. Babbitt's books, when their surface difficulties are penetrated, have a cannon-like force which makes the popular rhetoric of a Mencken sound like a cap-pistol. In any case, that two such groups of books, which, whether taken singly or together, form the most important literary and general criticism written in English in this century, should have had to wait so long before becoming known to the general reading public is one of the strangest incidents in literary history.

As has so often happened in the case of distinguished American writers, More and Babbitt have been more quickly recognized abroad than at home. Both men have a considerable following in England, in the universities and out. Babbitt is well known in France, and is a corresponding member of the *Institut*. The first full-length book discussing the work of the two men, along with their former colleague, W. C. Brownell, appeared in France last year, Louis J. A. Mercier's *Le Mouvement humaniste aux Etats-Unis*. More's great work on the Greek Tradition is making its way to international recognition as a monument of historical and philosophical criticism. In Stockholm he is being prominently suggested as a likely recipient of the Nobel Prize for literature. In intelligent hostility, likewise, Europe has anticipated this country: the first detailed and lengthy attack on the work of either man was published in London a few months ago, *The Proving of Psyche*, by Hugh I'Anson Fausset, a critique of Irving Babbitt. (This book is now available in this country, published by Harcourt, Brace.)

But in America, also, their ideas were making headway, and as long as a dozen years ago volumes of scholarship and criticism began to appear bearing the impress of their minds. They were acquiring "disciples", largely, as was natural, in academic circles. About two years ago these disciples began to be heard from, augmented by recruits from the world of journalism. They attracted increasing attention throughout the last year, and in recent months have placed themselves emphatically in the center of discussion. The appearance of their manifesto, *Humanism and America*, marks the culmination of this first phase of the wider fame of More and Babbitt.

It is interesting to compare the respective parts played by the work of the two men in bringing about the present movement. More has always been the better known, by reason of both the quantity and the manner of his writing. He had published a dozen volumes treating scores of the best known literary figures when Babbitt's work consisted of but three volumes of specialized, almost technical, literary and educational criticism. This greater conventionality in the form of More's work, together with the surface appearance of ordinary conservatism in his views, led to his being confused by many readers with the popular "official" critics of the day. The inability to distinguish More from the upholders of a repressive gentility to whom they wished to give a drubbing was the fatal error in the career of Mencken and many a lesser critic, certain to cost them their permanent reputations. Another characteristic of More's writing was that the richness and charm of the style could be enjoyed for their own sakes, as could also the easy handling of enormous scholarship and the keen play of ideas. The esthetically inclined and the philosophically inclined could derive great pleasure from his work without being seriously touched by it. They could applaud his "learning" and his "charm" and his "intellectual power" without bothering with his

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ideas. That is to say, they could patronize and dismiss him, which most of his bright young readers proceeded to do.

Not only is More's work better known, it is also probably of greater intrinsic importance, if only because he has in *The Greek Tradition* made what is certain to be his principal contribution, whereas Babbitt's work is presumably only partially completed. Nevertheless, the present increase in the audience of both men is due primarily to Babbitt. In part this is a result of Babbitt's long years of direct contact with young men as a teacher, but much of it springs from the characteristics of his writing. He places much more emphasis on ideas and doctrines: instead of giving balanced estimates of individuals, he concentrates on hammering home certain ideas. Where More often seems content to write for an audience of his peers, Babbitt is always aiming directly at those who may be infected by his views. He cannot easily be evaded by the indolent, as More can: where More's style is eloquent, Babbitt's is smashing; where one charms you, the other knocks you down. The drive of Babbitt's sharply antithetical sentences, the piling of one irrefutable definition on another, the biting irony, the dry, bitter humor, the torrent of apt quotation and illustration, the slowly cumulative weight of reasoning—all these do not stop at pleasing the wits and senses, they do things within the mind itself: they pick up words and ideas, rearrange them, and when they are settled in the mind again they have been permanently altered.

One result that Babbitt's books can have is to make More's books seem utterly different—different, that is to say, for those who have enjoyed only More's surface qualities and patiently borne his "moralizing" and "sermonizing". After the experience of reading Babbitt they are likely to find that More's work has taken on a new appearance, with the moral aspects of it fitting perfectly into the whole structure.

Another factor that has made Babbitt the central figure in recent developments is the greater definiteness of his program: he seems to be the kind of personality that functions naturally as a *maître d'école* and provides effective strategy for followers to carry out. The word "humanism", for instance, now serving as a useful watchword, is one that he provided in its present use. But the chief factor that makes Babbitt the storm center of the controversy, and will increasingly as the real issues are more generally understood, is deeper than his methods of writing or his traits of personality: it is his radical scepticism. The modernists are not used to finding the views that Babbitt champions in persons as agnostic as themselves. They associate the views with the Church and other institutions they have discarded.

When an intellectual turns Christian the modernists do not become horrified, except for a brief space. They soon say, "Well, that puts him out of the running as a leader in thought, but he was always an interesting writer and he will doubtless continue to do interesting things which we can enjoy". If he expresses a secular view contrary to their own, they say, "Of course, he is a Christian and would have to think that way, or at least to talk that way". His Christianity they have conveniently accounted for by ascribing it to some kind of accident or neurosis, and are then content to accept him as a more or less interesting contemporary not entirely spoiled by his mild form of insanity. Thus Mencken, classifying T. S. Eliot as a "natural Catholic", is then glad to use him as an ally against Babbitt. Edmund Wilson, again, says that Eliot's Anglo-Catholicism comes from his Puritan background, and continues to enjoy his poetry—and, of course, to be baffled by his criticism. Wilson's discovery of the origins of Eliot's faith would seem to need amplifying in two small points: to account for all the converts to Anglo-Catholicism who have no Puritan background; and to account for all the descendents of the Puritans who are as sceptical as Edmund Wilson.

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By this contemptuous kind of dismissal of the religiously inclined the modernists find it easy to dismiss also the secular opinions which the church, as a guardian of traditional wisdom, has always emphasized. The result is that when they meet a full-grown man, obviously intelligent and no less sceptical than themselves, expressing views that they disposed of along with their childhood religion, they are maddened to fury. It is this fact that makes Babbitt, as we have said, the storm center of the present controversy. As a champion of orthodoxy who insists on deriving his opinions "experimentally" and without supernatural sanction, his position is a most challenging one in a country where so large a proportion of those capable of entering into general criticism, or enabled by profession to influence its course, have in recent years been complete sceptics—so that one can go for a year in New York literary and publishing circles without meeting with a single practicing Christian.

The modernists, of course, do their best to get out of the hole into which Babbitt thus places them. Their favorite way is to sidestep his powerful onslaught on the bases of their beliefs by trying to "discredit" him by way of religion. Their arguments are variations of these three "charges": that he is religious without knowing it; or that he would be religious if he were consistent; or that he is on his way to religion. It is interesting to note how by elaborating this method all the various groups who are at present coöperating in a strong attack on modernism are successively dismissed by being played off against one another. Of a sceptic like Babbitt they say, for instance, that he is not yet as consistent as his partner More, whose acceptance of Christianity is the only logical outcome of their mutual way of thinking. But of More they say, as of T. S. Eliot, that his Anglo-Catholicism is merely a compromise, that he has not the courage to go all the way to Rome, the only sensible thing to do if one is going to be a Christian at all.

All the time, of course, their opinion is that anyone who is a Christian is a fool. It is no longer possible, as Edmund Wilson puts it, "for a first-rate mind to accept the supernatural basis of religion"; T. S. Eliot's conversion is "sadly symptomatic of the feeble condition of modern literary people, of their unwillingness or incapacity to confront the realities about them". (Which is to say that T. S. Eliot, Paul E. More, and Jacques Maritain, for instance, are less intelligent than Edmund Wilson. Which is absurd.) In this way, you see, they can show themselves superior to everybody concerned, and at the same time avoid the main issue confronting them, that of examining and defending the bases of their philosophy, morals, and esthetics—where they have been vigorously challenged, indeed have already met defeat. But there is a sweeping completeness about this "argument by religion" that one cannot but admire. The logic is clear, neat, and charming. And unanswerable. And not worth answering.

For better or worse, the work of Irving Babbitt and Paul More and their associates has come to be known by the term humanism. There are obvious advantages for a body of work which has become a movement and in some respects a campaign to acquire a label and a slogan. But there are also disadvantages—not the least of which is that of attracting the attention of persons incapable of understanding what it is all about, who merely get in the way. Another disadvantage is that it gives an opportunity to its enemies to demand a *definition*—a clear-cut, precise, brief, unanimous definition. Not all requests for a definition, of course, come from those hostile to humanism. Many who have been made curious about a movement so obviously of great importance to both its partisans and its opponents are led, naturally, to ask the meaning of its name. To them the answer is simple. It is the same answer we made above concerning the evidence for our description of the work of More and Babbitt: so complex

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subject cannot be adequately or even intelligibly put into a "definition", or a brief account.

When two men, supplemented by a dozen others, have spent a lifetime filling volume after volume with subtle discriminations, profound definitions, detailed historical and biographical analyses, elaborate esthetic evaluations, etc., etc., and have given their work not only adequate expression but often expression of high literary skill, it is clearly futile, when their work acquires a name, to ask the question "How do you *define* it?"—or to try to answer the question. A complex body of work cannot be defined: it can only be looked up in the original sources. The most that can be done otherwise is to indicate the general drift and present examples, which is bound to be in some degree misleading because incomplete. In the January BOOKMAN Robert Shafer gave a masterly summary in a few hundred words; in this issue Paul E. More gives a longer and still better one; and yet the two hardly overlap in a single particular. They could each have written still other summaries equally good and equally different.

One point to remember is that the suffix *ism* does not necessarily denote something easy to define. Some words are comparatively simple, like agnosticism, scepticism, barbarism, Americanism. Others are of much greater complexity—pragmatism, deism, behaviorism, Buddhism, Platonism—and can only be adequately understood through the sources. Humanism is clearly in this latter class. Look up Platonism in Webster's large dictionary if you would see the horrible result of trying to compress the work of Plato into five hundred words. Or try, even, to understand Plato by reading the sixteen pages in the Encyclopedia Britannica. The poor dictionary and encyclopedia makers have to perpetrate these monstrosities, just as there are handbooks that give you all the literature of the world in abstract. May heaven preserve humanism from this fate yet a little while!

Most of the requests—nay, demands—for a definition come from opponents hoping thus to make the whole subject seem confused and dubious, and to score points when they find divergent views. If you said to them "Define Platonism", or "Define the Encyclopedists", or "Define Goethe, or Emerson, or Saint Beuve, or Gourmont, or Santayana, or Dewey", they would doubtless reply that you were being irrelevant. It is especially amusing to notice how many ancient enemies of Babbitt and More, who have these many years considered themselves perfectly competent to discuss their work in print, now suddenly have become very ignorant and reiterate "How do you *define* humanism?" or, "Look, they can't define it!" or, still more damning —and they will take special delight in using Mr. More's article in this issue for the purpose—"Why they can't even agree among themselves!" For in the present controversy the enemy are not very particular what arguments they use.

So far, most of the public discussion of humanism has been on no higher plane than the one just indicated. If the opponents are not defying the humanists to define humanism, they are squabbling over the humanists' right to use the term at all. What they actually oppose is the humanists' ideas, but they find it easier to adopt obscurantist tactics than to tackle the real issues. They spend much of their time elaborately and emphatically pointing out that other people have used humanism in other senses, even in nearly opposite senses; and in calling the humanists names for perverting such a glorious old word. This, of course, is about as relevant and sensible as it would be for prohibitionists to attack the national anti-prohibition organization calling itself the Crusaders on the ground that the fight for Jerusalem and the fight for alcohol are not quite the same.—Even if it could be conclusively proved that the humanists' use of their name is arbitrary and unjustifiable, it would still leave the massive structure of their work just where it now stands. Which is to say in a very challenging position.

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HUMANISM AND AMERICA.—The publication of *Humanism and America* will doubtless precipitate a great deal more of the same kind of wilfully ignorant opposition. In any case the book will serve better than any other one thing to bring the work of More and Babbitt to the attention of a large number of inquiring minds. Its success or failure, we should say, will be measured by the extent to which it induces readers to hunt out for themselves the books of the two older men and the others associated with them. At the same time, the book itself is of considerable merit. If it is read with any attention, it should go a long way toward elevating the plane of American critical discussion.

The preface by the editor, Norman Foerster is an excellent introduction not only to the diverse essays that make up the book, but to the whole subject of humanism. Mr. Foerster has shown himself in earlier volumes, notably in *American Criticism*, to be a profound student of American literature who at the same time has a philosophic grasp far beyond that associated with professors of literature in a period when the humanities—as Mr. Foerster has himself forcibly protested in *The American Scholar*—are largely in the hands of soft esthetes and narrow philologists. His able championing of More and Babbitt, and above all his carrying through of the editing of this volume, make his accomplishment of almost unequaled importance among his generation of scholars, teachers, and critics.

The opening chapter of *Humanism and America* is a direct frontal attack on the most insidious and the most deeply entrenched of all the modern fallacies which the new humanists are engaged in combatting, the acceptance of "science" as an authority, with the potentialities of being a much greater authority, in the worlds of thought, emotion and value. It is not science proper which is being opposed; "but false claims are now being advanced on all sides under the shelter of its name, and it is these false claims which the humanist is concerned to expose". It is fortunate that the new humanists number among them a physicist of the standing of Louis T. More, who has at the same time historical, philosophical and literary expertness of so high a quality. For the sharpest fighting in any attempt to restore humane values is likely to center around ideas connected with science; it is well that the humanists cannot be dismissed as "a bunch of English teachers who don't know anything about science".

It is difficult to gauge just how successful Professor Babbitt's contribution, "Humanism: An Essay at Definition", will be in its main purpose, which we take to be that of engaging the interest of the newcomer. Readers acquainted with his books will find the paper an excellent summary of the more doctrinal aspects of his work, and in several capital points an important supplement to it. But it may be that in yielding to the temptation to "define"—that is, to sum himself up—Professor Babbitt has had perforce to limit himself so closely to "conclusions" and to use so many words in special senses which he has elsewhere expounded at length, that new readers will be puzzled rather than illuminated or attracted. Certainly the discussion of the complex problem of the relation of humanism to religion is a post-graduate course in the subject. Readers finding the piece difficult will be doing themselves and Professor Babbitt an injustice if they judge his books by it.

As Mr. More points out in his paper in this issue, his share in the symposium is only indirect, in the form of two sections from the long title essay of his latest book, *The Demon of the Absolute*. If any readers are impelled by the excerpts to go to the book itself, they will find in it more final estimates of contemporary American authors than in any other book or study—probably more final estimates of an author's contemporaries than in any other single book in the language.

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Of the humanist "old guard", the other representative is Frank Jewett Mather, our leading critic of art, with a sensible and eloquent discussion of the possibility of art in a democratic nation, and the possibility of humanistic ideals in general. Somewhat older than the remaining contributors is Sherlock Bronson Gass, who has a rich essay style not only superior to most of the contributors to the book, but of a kind but rarely encountered in America. In his books, as in this essay, Professor Gass has been a subtle and charming defender of the importance of humane letters in education, not only for individual happiness but, as he here maintains with great persuasiveness, for the social communion necessary to the smoothly running state.

Norman Foerster, G. R. Elliott and Robert Shafer are college professors who have shown in volumes of criticism that they are the best equipped of the humanists just entering on their mature years. Mr. Elliott's essay is as important as has appeared anywhere in some time, a weighty sermon aimed at deep needs of the times. Readers who reflect on the problems he raises, and on his findings, will gain an excellent idea of the true character of the implications of the humanist movement. Robert Shafer's analysis of Theodore Dreiser is one of the acutest pieces of criticism we have ever seen—certainly the definitive study of Dreiser.

Three new names worthy of attention are brought before the reading public by *Humanism and America*: Alan Reynolds Thompson, Harry Hayden Clark and Stanley P. Chase. Besides their expertness in their own specialty of English literature, they bring to criticism a philosophic range, a grasp of first principles, an assimilated historical background, far beyond that commonly displayed in current discussions of literature. Mr. Chase's survey of current poetry is surely the best that has been done. Within Mr. Clark's abundance of facts—perhaps there are too many—lies a fundamental discussion of fiction in general, and American literature in general, which is worthy of the closest attention. Mr. Thompson's essay, "The Dilemma of Modern Tragedy", is a masterly study of a theme of permanent importance, closely connected with all the serious problems about modern life which humanism raises. His examination of authors of this decade like O'Neill and Jeffers is no less fine than his discussion of older figures and of general principles. In Mr. Thompson the authentic tone of his masters is plainly heard.

Probably the most significant aspect of *Humanism and America* is the emergence of critics like Mr. Thompson and Mr. Clark and Mr. Chase, young men who have recognized the importance of Babbitt and More, have assimilated their ideas as best they could, and are carrying them into their profession of teacher at colleges scattered around the country. Of all of them, perhaps of most of the contributors to the symposium, it can be said that they lack the literary gift, the sheer writing brilliance, of Stuart Sherman, the first disciple of the older men to make a mark in American criticism. We should say that this was a very good sign. For these younger men have obviously had their minds altered in a far more fundamental way than Sherman ever did, and are likely to grow in insight rather than diminish. For Sherman, as appeared later, had not been deeply influenced by his first masters, but had, with his tremendous facility, which was in his soul as well as in his pen, merely aped them. It might be said that Sherman was the price that Babbitt had to pay for being so brilliant and so powerful a figure: under the impact of meeting him and his ideas, Sherman proceeded to adopt his manner more like one in a hypnotic trance than like one truly convinced; when the spell wore off his real nature appeared. It is not likely that any of these men will repeat Sherman's weirdly inverted career.

In a classification of the contributors to *Humanism and America* according to the ex-

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tent to which the articles may be said to supplement or apply the work of More and Babbitt, lowest place would be given to Bernard Bandler and Gorham B. Munson. Mr. Bandler has elsewhere written of both of the older men in a way that makes it questionable not merely how much in sympathy with them he is, but how well he has understood them. In his section of the symposium he writes of ethics in its relation to psychology. Humanism is mentioned several times, but we find it difficult to see the same subject that the other authors represent in this statement: "The essence of humanism is the refusal to allow any sudden break of development, any shift of basis that arbitrarily repudiates one's past, such as breaking one's word. Its method is to survey life in the light of death". We may be doing Mr. Bandler an injustice in lifting this out of its context, but even in its context it baffled us. We ought to add that more than half the essay similarly baffled us.

As Mr. Munson's work shows, and as he himself has always made plain, he is not so much a disciple of Babbitt and More as an occasional ally of their partisans. This alliance seems to be based less on a liking for the humanist ideas than on a greater dislike for other ideas which the humanists also oppose. As he himself put it recently (in a letter to *The Saturday Review of Literature*, December 28, 1929), "I don't think that the New Humanists possess the *best* ideas accessible in our time". What his own favorite ideas are Mr. Munson has not yet revealed, so that his position cannot be defined or judged. In the meantime his independence makes his occasional surveys of American letters interesting, and his discussion of criticism during the past fifteen years is as interesting a thing as he has done. However little it may have to do with humanism, it is doubtful that the other contributors would dissent from many of his opinions. Though certainly none of them—nor any other critic that we know of—would agree with him that Stuart Sherman did not write well. And few if any would follow him in discrediting psycho-analysis by means of behaviorism, or in finding T. S. Eliot's Christianity evidence of his being neo-classical.

In disposing of T. S. Eliot, Mr. Munson says, "He points out where Authority may be found, but one may doubt from the evidence of his writing whether Authority resides in him". But Mr. Eliot can reply that at least he points to well known institutions which his readers can investigate if they do not know them, whereas Mr. Munson merely alludes vaguely to "ideas". While Mr. Munson's position cannot yet be judged, various remarks indicate that he is far from the essentials insisted on by the humanists. For example, his reference to the *will* (in the letter cited) reveal that in this crucial question he is at odds with the view of Babbitt and More—who in this as in most matters speak for the universal commonsense of mankind. If it turns out that Mr. Munson is emerging as the exponent of some naturalistic chimera of his own, and thus as an enemy of humanism, the friends of humanism should remember that he was one of the first young men of his generation to revolt from the trivial and shallow authors and ideas that have been dominating our literature for a decade, and that his careful essays on Babbitt and More (in his book *Destinations*)—as well as the mere public knowledge that a prominent young critic was interested in them—did much to inject humanism into discussion.

T. S. Eliot's chapter, "Religion Without Humanism", is written with all his usual brightness, and with several paragraphs of greater depth than he usually permits himself; also with his customary cryptic hints and grave jests. But it has absolutely nothing to do with humanism as understood elsewhere in the book and as currently used in both England and this country. Eliot identifies the American humanistic movement with *cultivated scepticism*—which must surprise such openly avowed Christians as Paul E.

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More and G. R. Elliott, and will puzzle (though this will be a happy effect) all those critics who condemn humanism for being near-Christian. But his use of the word would not be correct even if all the new humanists were sceptics like Irving Babbitt and Norman Foerster.

Eliot's essays on humanism (this is the third in two years—a terrific number for him) seem to constitute the incomplete public record of his relations with the work of Irving Babbitt. This is a personal matter, concerning which the available information is small, but Eliot's influence is so great that the matter is worth discussing. As he has said in print, Eliot began as a disciple of Babbitt. Now Babbitt's work can be divided into four elements: (1) A negative attack on many important directions of the modern mind; (2) a restatement of dogmas, doctrines and discoveries about human nature as developed in Christian, classical and Oriental cultures; (3) a plea for culture in the Matthew Arnold sense; (4) an exposition, as yet incomplete, of his own philosophy or religion, which seems to be a sort of reverent agnosticism. It is in the first two of these that his main achievement lies. By far the greater part of his work is devoted to them, and both his reputation and his influence derive from them. This negative attack and this positive championing constitute the essence of the humanist movement. The third element is of course important in Babbitt's work—indeed he and More are certainly the ablest champions that Arnoldian culture has had—but it is not central to it, and is only an incidental aspect of humanism. The fourth element, Babbitt's personal solution of ultimate questions, will make one of the great documents of our time when it is fully expounded, but, like More's series of volumes on religion, is rather beyond the province of humanism.

Now Eliot, when he was influenced by Babbitt (he studied under him at Harvard), must have been influenced by the first two of the elements we have listed. Certainly he would have become an apostle of culture in any case; and certainly he was not made a Babbittian agnostic. Furthermore, the mark of Babbitt's principle work plainly shows in Eliot's criticism, with its hostility toward excessive or perverted romanticism, its emphasis on classicism, its power of definition, its respect for the great traditions. In fact much of Eliot's influence has derived from the fact that he has served as a channel for Babbitt's ideas, as made acceptable to many war and post-war young men by being refracted through a sensitive romantic poet instantly responsive to all the powerful currents of his time. So little is this aspect of Eliot's work understood, incidentally, that it is not unusual to meet with admirers of his criticism who are entirely unaware that his first critical book, *The Sacred Wood* (1920), contained an essay on Babbitt and More; they had read it so much under the influence of the "anti-academic" campaign of 1915-1925 that it had merely seemed to them a quaint indication of their hero's omnivorous mind. It should be added that the essay was so cryptic as to be ambiguous, though on the whole respectful.

After an interval of ten years Eliot returned to the subject of Babbitt and devoted three of his infrequent essays largely to casting scorn on a man from whom he professes the highest admiration and to whom he acknowledges a large debt. How is this strange procedure to be accounted for? We are at a loss to know. He still agrees with most that Babbitt says—of Babbitt's five hundred thousand words it is doubtful if Eliot could dissent from more than a few thousand—and yet in these three papers, besides the ridicule, he seeks to reduce Babbitt's work to a mere plea for culture and to a statement of a philosophical and religious stand which Eliot does not share—thereby denying the very parts of his work on which he himself had fed. Eliot's acceptance of Chistianity seems to enter into his attitude, but it is

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hardly a sufficient explanation, in the circumstances, for his writing about Babbitt considerably more sharply than he has ever written about anyone toward whom he feels open enmity.

Eliot's attitude is all the more surprising in view of the manner in which he has written about Charles Mauuras, another agnostic who has, like Babbitt, done supremely important work in the attack on modernistic errors and in the rehabilitation of tradition which have been going on during the past thirty years. It is doubtful if Eliot agrees with as many of Maurras's secular opinions as of Babbitt's; it is certain that Maurras has expressed a more contemptuous attitude toward orthodox Christianity than has Babbitt; yet for the one Eliot displays nothing but the greatest respect and affection, for the other patronizing admiration and easy ridicule. When a Roman Catholic was attacking Maurras on the grounds that his agnosticism was costing the faith of many, Eliot effectively replied that Maurras's work, on the contrary, was entirely in the direction of Christianity, and that it could be shown he had brought many to Christianity, when the contrary effect could hardly be conceived. Certainly these arguments work equally well for Babbitt. His whole work points toward the Christian tradition: a reader with Christian leanings will be greatly forwarded in that direction, one already a Christian will be immensely strengthened in his faith, while it is inconceivable that anybody could lose his faith through Babbitt.

Eliot has said that he started as a disciple of Babbitt's. He has also said that it was through Charles Maurras that he found his way to Christianity. We are relying entirely on guess-work when we suggest that Maurras seems to have completed what Babbitt began. But if this was not the case it *might have been*, and that is the point. By devoting one sketchy little essay to Babbitt while still an unbeliever, and three perversely distorted ones now that he is a believer, Eliot has clearly worked a serious injustice which would seem to call for a rectification—unless, of course, it is his intention to do what damage he can to Babbitt. In that case he should cease talking about his great admiration and his "discipleship". Our objection is not to the hostility which Eliot manifests—that is, in fact, very easy to be borne—but to the inconsistency, to say the least, of coupling it with professions of esteem. . . . Eliot's behavior is all the more surprising in view of his usual tendency to abstain from the critical attitude almost entirely when writing about those to whom he feels obligations of personal loyalty or gratitude (at least that seems the most reasonable way to account for his manner of writing about Ezra Pound and Wyndham Lewis).

Another fact is worth pointing out in the "strange case of Mr. Eliot"—Eliot is always so provocative that one is tempted to comment on his articles in more words than he used to write them. It should be noted that his three essays are not really related to the "religious attack on humanism", as they have been described as being. The religious attack takes two forms: romantic Christians unfairly using their religion as a basis from which to attack Babbitt's *secular* opinions (W. S. Knickerbocker, George Shuster); genuine humanists who also accept Christianity (Paul More, G. R. Elliott, G. K. Chesterton). The first is merely a special division of the general opposition. The second is what has been called the "religious attack", but as Mr. More shows in his article in this issue, there is actually no quarrel and from now on it is unlikely that the genuine alliance of the two forces under the rallying cry of humanism will be complicated by unreal dissentions.

Eliot is really in this second class, but so far his writings on the subject have taken an entirely private and sterile form, because of his failure to use the term humanism in its contemporary sense. (If he is being misled by the late T. E. Hulme's use of the word, as Mr. Shafer has suggested, he should note

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that the word is being used in the present discussions in a sense directly counter to Hulme's. Hulme identified humanism with the Renaissance and the modern consequences (which is nearer to the general and historical use). But the present humanistic movement is largely opposed to the final results of the Renaissance.

This has been a long digression from Eliot's short paper in *Humanism and America*. Briefly our opinion is this: Eliot remains a good humanist, and should properly be included in any humanist symposium. But his present paper, like the two that preceded it, is mainly irrelevant, because of his cramped use of the term humanism. This in turn seems to rise from some quirk in his attitude toward Babbitt. We hope, for the sake of completing the record, that the mystery will be cleared up.

There remains to note the concluding paper of the symposium, "Courage and Education", by Richard Lindley Brown, an example of the young men who are having the good fortune to find their way to More and Babbitt while they are still in college and thus to arrive at the center of things without futile years of wandering in the morass of modernism. Though it is not likely that many of them will have Mr. Brown's power of analysis or mature humor. A fit conclusion to a notable volume.

We had hoped to include a little account of the growth of the humanist movement during the last few years, and especially the gradual entry into the discussion of most of the leading magazines and newspapers. But lack of space makes it necessary to postpone this until next month, when we will combine it with an examination of the reviews of *Humanism and America*. It is amusing to trace the steps by which it was finally forced on the attention of editors, reviewers, and the literary world in general that an issue of real magnitude was being raised, not to be lightly dismissed as something already out of date; and still more amusing to watch the critics as the full horror of the situation dawned on them and their tolerant amusement or contemptuous disdain quickly altered to cut-throat ferocity.

In the weeks before the appearance of the symposium every article about humanism, every mention of the subject—and there were many—was being greeted by a chorus of hoots, jeers, and curses, providing ample warning of the kind of reception the book itself would receive. A bad press was only natural: in a period during which the chief requirements for a literary critic have been a tough stomach and a careless philosophy, it would be too much to expect a respectful hearing for the ideas involved in humanism. The boys and girls of the press did not bother to find out much about the new tendencies represented by the word, but they have one and all sensed that this was something that struck at their most deeply cherished convictions. And they are right. Nor should they even be blamed for the tactics they were not above adopting (which we will illustrate next month): after all, their backs are against the wall, for if a few managing editors become aware of how things are going, there will be some highly talented literary critics pounding the pavement.

The hostility has served the humanists very well. The impact of the strong renewed advocacy of the views of Babbitt and More has been so resounding, the enemy has leaped into the fray so passionately at the first sign of a flourish of arms and a truculent tone, that the main job of the humanists is already accomplished: Babbitt and More have been placed squarely in the center of American critical discussion. The vogue of the word humanism will doubtless be brief, but it has already served its purpose. Until the word was caught up and used as a label and a battle-cry, as a joke and an epithet, there was still some danger that the work of Babbitt and More might have to wait an even longer time before the comparatively small number of men who were finding their way to it

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could make themselves heard. But the barrier of silence has at last been permanently broken.

Henceforth no one can play an important part in American intellectual life, or even be an intelligent spectator of it, who has not some familiarity with the books of both the humanist leaders. And to an increasing extent our men of ideas will be submitted to the test of the degree to which they have assimilated them. What the upshot will be remains to be seen. One result can be safely predicted: that in the new circumstances American critical discussion will be automatically lifted to a higher level than it has had for fifteen years. This could hardly be otherwise, since the two main critical influences during that time have been the trivial and childish ideas emanating from H. L. Mencken, and the more respectable but sterile and already stale preoccupations of Brooks, Bourne, and their descendents. The young men just coming along are not likely to be content with these shallow and provincial notions now that the way has been shown them how to get in touch with the main concerns of modern civilized men.

* * *

In conclusion we will quote the last paragraph of an essay which Paul Elmer More wrote twenty years ago. The essay was on Victorian literature, with the subtitle "The Philosophy of Change". Its theme was the disregard for permanence, the concentration on flux and change, the neglect of the past, the conception of man as completely immersed in evanescent nature, the satisfaction with formlessness, which shaped the spirit of the nineteenth century and today, to an even greater extent, govern literature, and philosophy, and education, and society. "The only salvation," said Mr. More, "is in the recognition of some superior guiding and dividing law of just rule and right subordination, in the perception, that is, of something permanent within the flux". Then he added:

"There is need of firm hearts and clear brains to bring us out of this slough of indifference, but unfortunately the strong men are too often paralysed by a curious superstition of words. The saying has gone abroad that strength means joy in change and that he who would question change is reactionary and effeminate; and so in the name of progress and virility we drift supinely with the current. If by reactionary is understood only the man who shudders at all innovation and who cries out for some impossible restoration of the past, the charge is well made. Such a man in the social realm corresponds to the metaphysician who would deny the existence of change and the *many* for an exclusive and sterile idealism of the *one*. But reaction may be, and in the true sense is, something utterly different from this futile dreaming; it is essentially to answer action with action, to oppose to the welter of circumstances the force of discrimination and selection, to direct the aimless tide of change by reference to the co-existing law of the immutable fact, to carry the experience of the past into the diverse impulses of the present, and so to move forward in an orderly progression. If any young man, feeling now within himself the power of accomplishment, hesitates to be called a reactionary, in this better use of the term, because of the charge of effeminacy, let him take courage. The world is not contradicted with impunity, and he who sets himself against the world's belief will have need of all a man's endurance and all a man's strength. The adventurous soul who today against the reigning scientific and pragmatic dogma would maintain no vague and equally one-sided idealism, but the true duality of the one and the many, the absolute and the relative, the permanent and the mutable, will find himself subjected to an intellectual isolation and contempt almost as terrible as the penalties of the inquisition, and quite as effective in producing a silent conformity. If a man doubts this, let him try, and learn. Submission to the philosophy of change is the real effeminacy; it is the virile part to react."

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A LETTER FROM ABROAD

by Rebecca West

In defence of snakes—Autographs and reputations—The decline of the naturalistic novel —How Woolf, Huxley, Garnett and others are bringing back to the English novel its old wonder and passion—Will young Evelyn Waugh be the Max Beerbohm of his time? —Arnold Bennett, smoking a black cigar, speaks harshly to the author.

London, January.

Could it be that the dark agreeable person had said that he was sorry one had not been well lately and that he hoped one would try playing with the snakes in the Zoo as a means of soothing the nerves exacerbated by convalescence? It did not seem to be that sort of party. But certainly he had said it. He continued to say it, he called for one in an automobile and committed one to what had been one's mild social assents, not intended to be put into action. And lo! it was true. Playing with snakes is as milk to the nerves. They started one on the smaller sand snakes. "This one," they said, "you'll find very quiet. He's just had a hearty meal of white mice." I ran him through my hands and found it exquisite to handle a warm, compliant chaplet of repletion. So would I have felt, had a god taken me up and run me through his hands, when I left Foyot's that evening last summer after the Sachses and I had dined off petite marmite, chicken en casserole with cream and mushrooms, crêpes suzette. But of the full satisfying rhythm I had not experience till I played with the large pythons that trail seven or eight feet along the ground when they go walking. One picks him up, passes one's fingers along him, he gives one back the rhythm of the movement in a countermovement that coils him round one's forearm, one shows him that one's arm is not without rhythm when it wants it, he is above one's elbow; when his head passes above one's shoulder one offers him one's other wrist; he is a part of one, he is separate from one with a strong and graceful separateness from which one is glad to accept what decree of rhythm he chooses to lay down. There is no qualification holding one back from acceptance of this rhythm, for there is nothing here repugnant. "It felt like a snake . . ." Man says that all the world over, and means the same thing; cold, slimy, fish-like, trailing, nauseous. And it is a lie. A snake feels warm and dry and clean, exactly as hand-bags or shoes made out of snakeskin do. But mankind is full of quaint errors regarding more important matters than the feeling of snakes. We were looking at the huge reticulated python, that needs sixteen men to handle it, since it must be kept straight out, lest it should coil and crush. "How do you give it its chickens?" I asked the keeper, a lad with a face round as a button mushroom. "On a stick," said he, and added, with a shade of contempt, "it don't seem to have the *intelligence* to distinguish between my hand and food." What sublime anthropomorphism, to

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believe that there is a division, perceptible to all save the dullest eye and mind, between the human hand and that which is appointed to be a python's food! What superb implied belief that man is the protected darling of the universe! And how universally held it is! Almost as universally held as the belief that snakeskin, which is warm and dry and clean, is cold and shiny and fish-like.

* * *

Mankind has, indeed, a genius for getting hold of the wrong end of the stick. The other day I came across a curious minor example of this in the proceedings of a wealthy American who presented himself at my house just after he had arrived in England. His eye was caught by three framed letters that stand on my bookshelf. One, as black and white and neat as winter trees against the sky, ends with the hope that "*vous ne doutiez pas du tendre et respectueux attachement de votre très humble et très obeissant serviteur, Voltaire*". The second drives ahead in the large, calm handwriting that one would never guess to be D. H. Lawrence's if one did not recall with what serenity he has kept his unserene course and never deviated into tameness. The third has its words scratched down on the paper exquisitely, casually, critically, as if the writer regarded words as butterflies that she had the power to put into the world, and feared if she put them in too positively they would attain freedom of flight and do all manner of things not relevant to the matter reason has taken in hand. It is inevitable that that should be the handwriting of Virginia Woolf, who must find it difficult to write not as most people do, because of knowing too little, but because of knowing too much. The American expressed admiration for these possessions, and announced that he too was going to buy some interesting manuscripts and autographs. He spoiled it all by announcing of what authors he meant to acquire these imperishable mementoes. As well could I imagine a sane human being going forth to spend large sums of money in acquiri the steering-wheels of ancient Fords. Nothi surely can be more obvious than that m of the great names that have dominated t last twenty years stood for something strictly limited in interest to their own a and were so loosely connected with the tri tradition of art that today they seem as o and empty as mummy-cases. There are, course, exceptions. George Moore is ever year being more and more fully recognize as among the greatest of English writers, an it is inconceivable that he should ever b denied this rank. Shaw and Wells stan below him, but they seem assured of som degree of positive existence. Not so their con temporaries. I mention no names, for I have no desire to use this column for the spreading of bad news; but there are at least two notorious cases where men who in the past have done a little first-rate work have covered it over with such a plethora of second-rate work that they have lost all critical prestige and the generation who buys their books because it has heard them referred to respectfully from its youth up is being succeeded by a generation who will not buy their books because it regards them as proofs of its parents' bad taste, violently to be rejected.

* * *

Why, then, I asked the American, collect mementoes that will in a decade or so embarrass the owners as much as onyx tables or milking stools embarrass the house-proud wife of today. For, make no mistake, the tin gods have gone forever. The naturalist novel which was their pride and glory was a tame and insignificant thing, a repetition of form without elucidation, a mere worm-cast. It was English fiction without anything that has been added to it by Defoe, or Fielding, or Sterne, or Jane Austen, or Scott, or Dickens, or Thackeray, or Trollope. It had neither a sense of the wonder that pervades life at its most ordinary, nor wit, nor pas-

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sion, nor quick-eyed observation. It was nearly nothing. When I went lecturing in the United States (nobody had told me not to) people asked me if I did not find the Middle West dull. Did I find it dull, when I had been reviewing English novels for years upon years? I did not. Therefore, were I an American collector I would have nothing to do with writers of the last generation. I would turn to those of the present who are bringing the English novel or essay or poem back to its tradition and putting into it its proper ration of wonder and wit and passion and observation; Virginia Woolf, Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, David Garnett, Stella Benson, Robert Graves, the Sitwells, Richard Hughes. I would even take a gamble and think myself running no risk at all if I backed an author still in his very early twenties and bought every manuscript I could lay hands on by Mr. Evelyn Waugh. This young man is, I fancy, destined to be the dazzling figure of the age as Max Beerbohm was of his. In person he is clear-eyed and knee-rounded as a cherub before the cinquecento got cherubs gross, and as neat as a gardenia prepared for the buttonhole. Engaging he is, and yet that engagingness might strike one as pitiful did one but know of his literary aspirations without having seen any of his performances, for he has one hell of a literary heredity. He is the son of Arthur Waugh, a writer whose extreme impressionability by his own works is, I think, without parallel in the history of letters. For in the 'nineties, when quite a young man, he published in the *Yellow Book* an essay on "The Necessity for Reticence in Literature", and was so convinced by it that he practised the extremest form of the recommended virtue by never writing anything else; unless one counted certain reviews in the *Daily Telegraph*, which used to have a literary page that a weary soul might easily mistake for a four-poster, but even they might be regarded (in their failure to add anything to the matter under discussion) as reticence made positive. He has also a brother, Alec Waugh, who wrote a remarkable story about English public school life called *The Loom of Youth* when he was still a schoolboy, but who has never permitted himself in his subsequent books to be as interesting as he might be. This is an environment in which youth might discreetly ripen towards the point of literary burgeoning when a quietish essay on Crabbe or a novel about the insipid loves of the immature English might be expected. Instead . . .

* * *

Instead there was *Decline and Fall*, and now there is *Vile Bodies*. The merits of the first were overshadowed by Mr. Waugh's supreme and startling feat of doing what hardly any modern author has ever done in his first book: creating a character that simply and naturally takes its place among the great characters of fiction that are larger than life-size, and more significant than a single child of life can be. In Grimes, who is much more than one of the world's great rogues—those who by their serenity, their bloomy sense of inner rightness, almost persuade honest men that there is a strong moral case for roguery—the generation that has spent its youth overshadowed by Dr. Arnold and Rudyard Kipling joyously recognized an embodiment of all the exceedingly queer forms that Nature, driven out with a fork from the public school, assumes to effect a re-entrance. Go to *Journey's End*, and through its sincere and moving emotionalism look at the ghastly worship of infantilism, the ritualization of all processes likely to lead to insipidity, that sent those men to death, still boys in spite of their age. Then read in *Decline and Fall* the description of Grimes's war experiences, ending in his exquisite thanksgiving to the public school system: "I've been in the soup pretty often since then, but never quite so badly. Someone always turns up and says 'I can't see a public school man down and out. Let me put you on your feet again.' 'I should think,' said Grimes, 'I've been put on my

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feet more often than any living man'". Is Mr. Waugh nastily denigrating a fair structure whose fairness gets just rendering in the wholesome mind of Mr. Sherriff? He is not. I admire Mr. Sherriff's talent immensely and I have no patience with the criticism that cannot keep its mind on esthetic considerations and says that *Journey's End* is a bad play because it is about people whom it would be a bore to meet. But I also perceive that he is on a lower plane than Mr. Waugh. If Mr. Sherriff had the power to construct a universe after his own heart it would probably be a red jam of sacrifice, ennoblement by pain and the like. But Mr. Waugh is a satirist because (as are all the front rank of satirists) he is a disappointed romanticist. If he were to construct an ideal universe it would maintain itself by harmony, its children would be asked as discipline to refrain from destruction and all but constructive harmonies. Is this, too, criticism that cannot keep its mind on esthetic considerations? I do not think so. To be enamoured of the sacrificial conception of salvation is to have a mind so bound to the primal fantasies of man that its work will endlessly repeat and glorify them. Not to be dominated by that obsession is to have a free mind, that can look around at reality and proceed without bias to art's proper task of analyzing experience.

* * *

There is no Grimes in *Vile Bodies* and I suppose that humanity will gratify its deep need of being unpleasant by assuring Mr. Waugh that it is not so good as his first book. But it is actually better. It is, for one thing, enormously abundant and exquisitely intricate. I am all for abundance and intricacy in literature. People will not understand that literature has the same right to demand that readers should concentrate their attention on one book instead of spreading it over a dozen that painting and music have to demand time and receptiveness from their audience. If a person standing in front of Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" should say, "Look here, there are far too many things in this picture. I find it far too great a strain to absorb the whiteness of Venus, and the twining of the two winds in the sky, and the pattern on the robe of the nymph who steps forward to clothe the goddess, and the flowers underfoot, and the two stars low on the horizon that are foundering under the inrush of the day, and the little bays where it is still nearly night and the water is still dark and cold. The artist has put too much in this picture", we would answer, "But you are talking very preposterous nonsense. There are certainly a great many things in this picture, but they are all beautiful things. Stand there and look at them, and thank God for your luck, and maybe He will let you see the whole which the painter has made out of all these component parts". If a person should say at a performance of "Don Giovanni", "I don't like this, the music keeps on changing keys, and it's all broken up into different airs, and you never know where you are because the airs keep on coming back and being played all over again", we would say coldly, "It is evident that you are not musical, what you say of this performance is simply a melancholy and not interesting record of your own deficiencies". But to any ass who says, "This book is too full of brilliant things and beautiful phrases", or, "I find this book too complicated in its design because its events do not follow the same sequence as events in life and establish relationships that are subtler than those which are commonly the subject of general conversation in a liner smoking-room or a women's club's tea-party", we extend him a tolerance that he does not deserve. It is generally recognized that a picture need not take for its subject an apple on a plate, though some good pictures have done so, and that a piece of music need not be written in the key of C major and in two-four time and the infantile mood of "Lilla's a Lady" though a little (very little) good

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ısic has dared it. It should be generally ognized that literature need not, neither treatment nor in subject, be for the tiny s. A book cannot be too full of brilliant d beautiful phrases; but somebody may be ıding it too quickly to absorb them with nfort. A book cannot have too complicated design if it is significant; but somebody ıy be too dull-witted and hopelessly inapt words to comprehend any design more ricate than a triangle. Let them go and ome cooks at Childs's and cease to inter- ıe in literary matters. I am not saying that re is no such thing as an over-ornamented le; but that is not the same thing as an undance of beautiful and brilliant phrases; is a superfluity of phrases that cannot be scribed as beautiful and brilliant since they : not significant and relevant. Neither am I ing that there is no such thing as bad sign; but badness is far from being the ne thing as complication. Ask Donne. Ask tticelli. Ask Bach.

* * *

The sour mediocrities among critics who ld other views than these, disliking those ıo were given ten talents in their napkins ıen there was nothing in their own but les, will loathe and fear *Vile Bodies*. Its undance is glorious, like the toppling cor- copia carried by ample-bodied goddesses Angelica Kauffman ceilings. There is London a certain ricketty-racketty hotel ned by a lady who cooked for King Ed- ırd, and did that and more for the aristoc- y of his age, and now trails about all day d all night with a champagne glass in r hand that is always full though she al- ıys seems to have emptied it. Time is work- g on her beauty so that one cannot but nk of eternal things, but never was woman corsetted in the temporal things of her rticular age. The pale horse is plainly com- g soon, but one cannot see it except be- een the shafts of a hansom-cab. This culiar quality of hers, and the formal and fusty and raffish atmosphere of her house Mr. Waugh has perfectly conveyed in a few lines. The sum of many such sketches is that he gives by far the most real picture of modern London that I have yet read. Certainly I have never come across anything which went so near rendering the incoherence which has afflicted society in consequence of the invention of the combustion engine with any approximation of the vividness of the chapter on the automobile race. All these brilliancies are admirably subordinated to the central object. Often have I admired the technique that Anatole France employed when he wanted to give a picture of contemporary France in the Bergeret series (*The Wicker-Work Woman, The Elm-Tree on the Mall,* and so on). Panels representing scenes in different homes affected by the political situation that was the real subject of the book are hung side by side. Each is a calm, pretty, sunlit, elegant thing, like an eighteenth-century interior, offering a surface of deceptive calm until one looks into it and sees how it marks another stage in the progress of the subject. Mr. Waugh deals with contemporary London in something the same manner, speeding up his tempo to suit our age by the amazing intricacy of his design.

It is rather like a magic card game. His characters fall into the categories of the four suits. There are the spades, the souls doomed to destruction, Miss Agatha Runcible, who spins like a top at parties, round the track at the automobile race, into the nursing home, until she topples over into dementia and death; and the horrid little gossip-writer who at last grasps that the consensus of opinion is that he is horrible and puts his head into a gas-oven. There are the clubs, not so fatal as the spades, but low-priced and fatuous; like the drunken major whose appearances on occasions of public rejoicings give such a dreadful rhythm to the book. There are the diamonds: nobody writing in English has ever conveyed more poignantly the red and swollen appearance that is the badge of

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those whose success stands for nothing honorable or valid. There are the hearts, the two young lovers, in any other age than this inevitably the raw material for romance, in this age forcibly divorced from it. The cards are dealt out, the hands pick themselves up, they play a game, they re-shuffle themselves, they play again, till Mr. Waugh's thesis wins the rubber. Decidedly he has tremendous gifts. The question is, has he character? That this is necessary for the writer has been firmly fixed on my mind by the circumstance that whenever I come to the surface again after some painful experience entirely prohibitive of work, such as six months spent nursing a relative through a dangerous illness, I invariably meet Mr. Arnold Bennett, looking remarkably well and smoking a large cigar, who tells me that the reason I do not write more books is because I lack character. I am happy to say that Mr. Waugh has character. His first book was a monograph on Rossetti which showed great industry, not only in its research into its subject, but in its groundwork of general reading in esthetics, a subject always distasteful to the lax. Decidedly I would buy Mr. Evelyn Waugh's manuscripts, were I a collector.

* * *

Indeed our brilliant youth has character. That I thought the other night when I attended the concert at which young Constant Lambert conducted his good, hard, sturdily yet soberly original setting of Sacheverell Sitwell's *Rio Grande*. The question of the character of youth had, indeed, arisen before in connection with Mr. Lambert apart from his musical work. Some time ago I suggested to a firm of American publishers who have an office in London that they should comm sion Mr. Lambert, who writes as interesti ly on music as anyone I know, to write article for one of their periodicals. They so, and both parties seemed to look on enterprise with hopeful liking. Presen however, shadows fell. I heard complai that youth had no character, that it did understand that a job, once begun, should finished: that, in fact, the publishers had w ten to Mr. Lambert asking him to call at th office to discuss the necessary alterations the article he had sent them, and he had replied. This distressed me. I thought of M Lambert and his glittering appearance a the vivacity of his compact gladiatorial f ure, and hoped that not too much of t energy which should be turned to grow and habit was being sacrificed to me pluming of the wings in sunlight. For nately, however, the matter was cleared in a way that lifted all imputation from M Lambert's name. The American publish had, it appeared, addressed their letter to M Lambert, at High Holborn, where he liv without giving a number, though the str is long. In consequence they received, aft many days, an answer on paper head "Messrs. Lambert, Sanitary Engineers", somewhere in the North of England. Th thanked the publishers for their letter, a informed them that though they had mov their works and main offices from Lond they had still a representative there wh would call at once and see to the alteratio to the article, though they were surpris that any should be considered necessary, as was universally conceded that the type th supplied was as soundless and efficient as a on the market.

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THE FACTS OF LIFE

A Series of Parody Biographies by H. W. Hanemann

WITH SKETCHES BY HERB ROTH

V. A KUBLA GREAT BOYS

Richard Halliburton Plays Polo

PROLOGUE

Papa's home! Papa's home!" I cry, and rush madly into the solarium of our house in Venice. "And so is Uncle Maffeo!"

Songs of Araby and tales of far Cashmere. With popping eyes we listen to the saga of their wanderings. Beyond Soldaia to Sarai and Bolgara, across the Tigris and through the desert to Bokhara and on to Cambaluc, east of the Sun and west of the Moon. I burn with the fierce, white flame of aspiration. I, too, must see and hear and sense this magic. For me the camel caravan, the desert wells and tinkling temple chimes. They will be going back, Father and Uncle Maffeo. Christian envoys of a strange and mighty Mongol monarch, they have pledged return with Western ways to educate the East.

"Papa! Papa!" I cry, breathlessly, "Kin I go, too? Kin I?"

"Marco," Papa replies reprovingly, "the word is not 'kin', but 'can'—as in 'Kubla'." He looks to Uncle Maffeo for his opinion.

"Why not?" says good old Uncle Maff. Take him along, Nicolo—he's got to start some time. *Corpodibac'*—take him along!"

Marco Polo, trader, of the firm of Polo, Polo and Polo.

That night, the happiest urchin in all Venice, I slept with my old, tattered geography book under my pillow.

I. "NECKTIES! FRESH NECKTIES!"

Three days from the city of Chagannor, north by north-east is Xanadu, site of the palace built by Kubla Khan. The endless, vast, lofty rooms are gilt and painted with figures of men and beasts and birds and with a variety of trees and flowers.

Ever-changing vistas of incomparable splendor delight the eye at every point of vantage. Saddle horses are available with which to explore the many bridle paths of the fragrant pine woods, or for those who prefer the sparkling, crystalline waters of the lake, a variety of safe, speedy craft is offered. The nearby brooks abound with fish, and competent guides may be had at all hours. Instantaneous, courteous and efficient room service from a pitcher of ice to the expert remodelling of an evening frock is yours for the mere clashing of palm against palm.

I was in Xanadu—not only in Xanadu, but in the Khan's palace!

Armed with the golden tablets, Father had brought me before the mighty Kubla. At the foot of his throne I stood trembling. He was

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"'One—two—three,' said Kubla. ('Ook—Mak—Goom' in his own tongue.) Down, down into the sacred Alph I went."

swart and strong and stocky. His eyes held the look of eagles. His long, stringy mustache made me think of the licorice strings you got back home in the booths of the Venetian "cheap Giovannis" or "cheap Giacomos". Sometimes we called them "shoelaces".

"Kubla," said Father, "this is my son."

"Greetings, my lord," I replied, and flipping open my suitcase, I went straightway into my act. "How are you fixed for neckwear, friend? Here is a nice little number, wrinkle-proof, genuine plush brocade and guaranteed exclusive pattern worn by th Prince of Wales. How about a dozen? Ho about socks, shirts, suspenders. . . ?"

Kubla growled something in his ow language and broke into a radiant smil The interpreter rushed forward and relieve me of my suitcase.

"He says he likes you. He says you and h are going to be great friends. He says he' take anything you've got."

I staggered out into the open air and sa down on a convenient rock.

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It was my first meeting with the indomitable Kubla Khan. One look at me—and he had bought out my entire stock of neckties!

II. MADE TO MEASURE

"These, Marco," said Kubla Khan, "are the measureless caverns. I decreed this place for my pleasure dome on that account. Gives people something to talk about."

I peered into the gloomy depths where far below ran Alph, the sacred river. A sullen spot and one to cast a pall over the brightest spirit. Funereal cypress fringed the edge and overhead a bird of prey winged noiselessly.

"I'll bet I can measure them."

"But I tell you, Marco, they are absolutely measureless to man."

"I'll measure them," I repeated. "I have an idea."

I went out and bought up all the available rope. I spliced the ends, making one continuous piece which I marked off carefully into feet. Winding the rope on a light but sturdy bamboo reel, I was ready.

The next morning, Kubla and I gathered at the edge of the measureless caverns.

"You honestly intend to go through with this?" said Kubla.

"Of course," I told him with an assumed nonchalance, knotting one end of the rope firmly about a cypress tree.

"I don't think I ought to let you do it," said Kubla.

"Oh, don't be an old meany," I replied, attaching the bamboo reel to the seat of my pants. "You count three and we'll all know something we never knew before."

My idea was to jump from the edge of the caverns into the sacred Alph. As I jumped the rope would unwind from the reel on the seat of my pants and as I hit the water I would cut the rope with my legs, using a strong scissors stroke I learned swimming. Providing the rope didn't break somewhere else, which was a chance I had to take, the measurement at the cut would tell the tale.

"One—two—three!" said Kubla. ("Ook—mak—goom" in his tongue.)

I jumped.

After an eternity of rushing time, I hit the water with a resounding wallop and scissored the rope. The shock knocked my right eye into the left socket and my left eye into the right socket, which way they are this moment. Down, down, down into the sacred Alph I went, waving my hand to the mermaids as I went by. I hit the bottom and bounced back to the surface. Then I turned on my electric torch and swam over to the severed rope.

The measureless caverns measured exactly four thousand parasangs, eight hundred and sixty-two meters and nine feet!

III. THE TOP OF THE WORLD TO YOU

Helping Kubla Khan with the administration of his empire was all very well, but there was too much of a sameness about it. There were other places than Xanadu.

"I've had a dip in your sacred Alph," I said to Kubla one silken, star-shot evening as we sat under the pleasure dome over our melons, "and now I think I ought to swim the Sunless Sea. What do you think?"

"I think you could do it, Marco," Kubla answered, "so why bother? It's very cold."

"I've got to do something," I said. "Are there any mountains around here?"

"The best mountain we have is Mt. Everest, away off to the south-east. It's the highest mountain in the world. Nobody can climb it. Nobody will ever climb it."

That was enough for me. "Which way is south-east?" I asked.

Up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up and up! Those ups can give you but a vague impression of climbing Mt. Everest. Nor is the

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"I have conquered Everest. I shout! I sing! I dance!"

progress as unbroken. One step forward and three back, a sub-zero wind clawing, clutching and knifing you to loose your hold and whirl you frozen into oblivion. Ice—hard ice, rotten ice, slippery ice. Step—and slip, step again and fall, and stay where you are this time, gasping for breath.

Three months and a half ascending this beautiful, cursed mountain of 29,002 feet, and the end nowhere in view. Seventy-four times I have chipped off the ice which covers my sturdy bearer, Foo Yong Dong, from head to foot. I myself have been a solid cake of ice for the last eight days. I am too tired to care. Up and up and up!

What bones, what hopes, what bitter failures of men lie under this fleecy, terrible, dazzling blanket, doomed by the virgin Queen Mother of the World to perish for the enormity of their daring, their insult to her inviolate dignity. Untamed, unconquered and alone, she will not yield. Must I, too. . . . The rarified air is making you foolish, Polo, on . . . and up. . . .

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Five hundred yards from the top, I fall once more. I lie half-buried in the snow, my bursting lungs panting their last. I am dizzy. Yes, I am undeniably dizzy. Through the scudding snowflakes a dark figure looms, stumbling to my side. It is still my sturdy bearer, Foo Yong Dong. With my last remaining ounce of strength, I push him off the cliff and stagger on alone. Ten minutes later I am at the top. I have conquered Everest. I shout! I sing! I dance! I am the only white man to have climbed Mt. Everest! I am the only man of any color, of any pastel shade, ever to have climbed Mt. Everest! Ye gods! Am I man or god?

Three days later I had to climb Everest all over again. Like a damned fool, I had gone and left my fountain pen on the summit.

IV. 1/12 DOZ. PRINCESSES, F.O.B.

On my return to Xanadu, I found Kubla Khan wearing a long face. It was his own face, but he was wearing it longer than nature had intended it. Arghun, Khan of Persia, had asked Kubla to replace a Mongol wife of his (Arghun's) who had died. Kubla took stock and found that Princess Kukachin would fill the order nicely, but there was some difficulty about the shipment. Outlying bandits and wild and hostile tribes put the overland route out of the question. The sole remaining way was to go around to Persia by sea, a long and perilous trip.

"I hate to suggest it," Kubla said, "but judging from past performances, it looks as if you are the only person for the job."

I told him I had no intention of escorting a seventeen-year-old Mongol bride-to-be about the world and asked him if he had ever heard of Lancelot and Guinivere, or Tristam and Isolde. He hadn't.

Even if he had, it would have made no difference. He took my departure as an inevitable calamity. The feeling about the court was that my departure, one way or another, was in the stars. This way would probably be the most pleasant for me, all things considered. I took the hint.

At the conclusion of tremendous preparations, Kubla and I parted with mutual feelings of sincere regret, vowing eternal friendship and saying all the things the occasion demanded. I was loaded down with presents, instructions, assistants and authority. I felt like the head of a travelling circus.

Princess Kukachin I found to be an attractive young girl encompassing the salient points of beauty of her race. Torn between the sorrow of leaving the land of her birth and the curiosity of travelling abroad, flattered by the distinction of being the one chosen for Arghun's bride and terrified by the prospect, Kukachin could not be expected to be an intelligent companion. Surrounded by her female attendants, slaves, guards, eunuchs, pet dogs and other encumbrances necessary to a young lady of rank travelling on state business, Kukachin was sorely in need of one understanding, sympathetic, patient, comforting, calming friend.

This looked to be the most difficult and delicate exploit I was yet to undertake.

I had to deliver a Princess.

The bow of the ship rose and fell rhythmically with the waves, the wind sang in the rigging, the crew sang at the oars and under a silken awning aft, Kukachin sang native songs to her native *glunk*.

"Kukachin—little horsewoman," I said (for all her tribe are virtually born in the saddle), "how does it feel to be riding the great, great sea?"

"Swell." The boat rocked with approval.

"You are sad no longer?"

"How can I be—in such a night as this?" sighed Kukachin.

"'In such a night as this,'" I said, falling under the magic of its spell, myself, "'when the soft winds did kiss the trees and they did make no noise. . . .'"

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"'Beauteous night, oh night of love—'"

"'Sylvia's hair is like the night. . . .'"

"'Star of me, star of me, watching the mother skies . . .'" she sang.

"'Pale hands I loved beside the Shalimar where are you . . .,'" I sang.

"Marco . . ."

"Yes, Kukachin?"

"I'm cold!"

The girl was taking me seriously!

"Put on your coat, Kukachin. And remember, you are engaged to be married to Arghun, Lord of the Levant. You are almost there now, no more than eight months, four weeks and five or six days away."

"I know," said Kukachin. "But there is a proverb in my country which goes so: 'Does today's rice pudding dull the savor of next Tuesday's chocolate cake?'"

After that I kept the door of my cabin carefully locked.

V. THEY CALL ME FANTASTIC—KHÁYYÁM!

The green fringe of the lofty palms of Ormuz came out of the milky dawn. Maybe I wasn't glad to see them.

We were there.

Kukachin and I disembarked. A reception committee of Persian nobles stood waiting to receive us.

"Gentlemen," I said, taking the Princess by the hand, "meet Princess Kukachin, sent by Kubla Khan to be the wife of your Lord, Arghun. We've been a long time, but here we are. If you'll just sign this receipt . . ."

A volley of laughter broke forth from the Persian gentlemen. They howled, clasping their sides. Tears streamed from their eyes. Some rolled on the planks of the pier in utter disregard of their jewelled finery.

It was one on me. Arghun, it seems, had been dead for the past two years!

When the excitement had subsided, I told them they could settle it among them. I had done Kubla's bidding. After a hurried consultation, they decided that Kukachin could marry Arghun's nephew Ghazan, a youth nearer her own age and obviously more fitting to be her husband. The princess looked at me, looked at Ghazan and agreed. I wished them all happiness, shook Kukachin's hand warmly and started back to the ship. And then a thought struck me.

"Wait!" I said, "This is Persia, isn't it?"

I was informed that it was Persia with some rude comment about who did I think I was—Columbus?

"No," I said, "I'm Kháyyám—Marco Polo Kháyyám. Get me a jug of wine, a loaf of bread, a book of verses—and thou (to the astonished Kukachin), come here!"

While the obliging reception committee gaped with open mouths, I sat Kukachin and myself down under a near-by palm. I uncorked the jug, opened the book (it was a copy of Hafiz and I couldn't read the Persian characters), took a generous mouthful of bread and said to Kukachin—

"Now, sing!" (With the bread in my mouth it sounded more like "nnhhh, ffgghh!")

Kukachin promptly got up and went back to her newly-found Ghazan. As the marriage procession moved off, she looked back over her shoulder and cried, witheringly, "You're full of red ants!"

A myriad of needle-pricks assailed my ankles. I bent over and examined them.

So I was!

VI. HOME, BOYS, HOME

There is nothing of further interest to relate until I reached Venice and my publisher—my family safely, except that I stopped off at Bagdad long enough to invent the game of polo—for the *Persicos apparatus* to remember me by.

It happened like this:

Persia is a great melon country. Everywhere and in great profusion are melons so sweet as to crystallize themselves under

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the warm rays of the sun and others so tender as to jump off the stem and kiss the unwary and unsuspecting traveller.

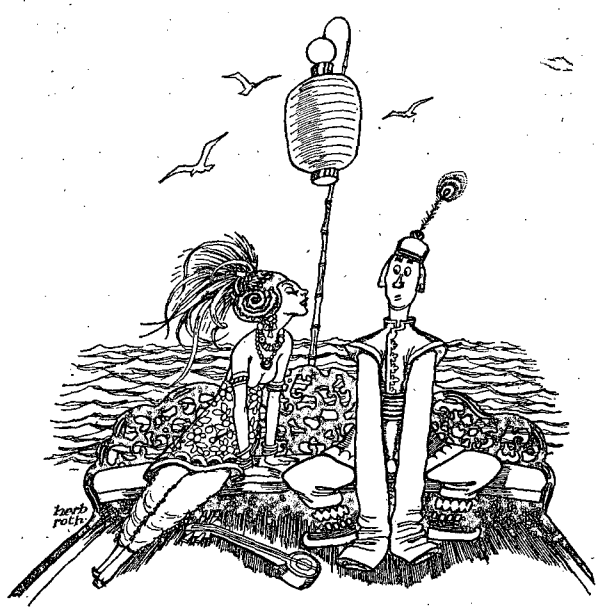
The melons in the patch through which our horses walked sedately were still to ripen. Being green, they were round and hard as cannon-balls. My horse accidentally kicked one which broke from the stem and rolled on down the field. Idly, I took the butt end of my long, rattan spear (we were on our way to a marshmallow roast) and hit it a smart blow. To everyone's delight, the melon rolled far and furiously. Like a flash, my spirited and intelligent Arab charger, who may have had a drop or two of Newfoundland blood for all I know, was after the melon. Again I hit it, and again. With whoops of joy, the Persians reversed their marshmallow spears and began knocking green, round melons all over the field. The game of polo was invented.

As I had to get back home, I left the game in its experimental stage, to be further regulated by the laws of the Medes and Persians. On my return, I attempted to introduce it in my native city of Venice but, owing to the topography of that city, the horses had to be discarded and the game modified into what is now well known as water-polo. Swimming being, after all, my favorite exercise, it found instantaneous favor.

A brisk session of water-polo in the Grand Canal of a long summer evening almost reconciles me to my present life—remote, alas, from the romance and adventure and quaint hardship I experienced in the land of Kubla Khan, far, far away on the other side of the world. Almost, but not quite.

But then there is still my old, begrimed, passionately beloved geography book.

THE FINISH



"'Marco . . . I'm cold!' Good Lord! The girl was taking me seriously."

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FICTION

CORONET *by Manuel Komroff* (COWARD-MCCANN. $3.00)

To ONE who is proud of having been among the first to hail Mr. Komroff's talent, *Coronet* comes as a considerable disappointment. Imbedded within the garrulity of these eight hundred pages there lie many passages and sections which proclaim, not merely an excellent artist, but a prophetic, a profound spirit; yet the book as a whole is a mechanical performance. *Coronet* is a titan made of wax.

This is a serious charge to bring against a writer of Mr. Komroff's stature and against a book which is the result of seven years of reflection. I make it all the more hesitantly because many reviewers more competent than myself have hailed this work as the masterpiece of its month. I can only assume that certain defects which appear to me fundamental bulk rather trivially in their eyes. Among these defects one might list the vagueness of *Coronet's* central conception, the ambiguity of its symbolism, the artificiality of its structure, the woodenness or eccentricity of its characterization, the triteness (with several gorgeous exceptions) of its ideology and the slavic loquacity (again with some notable exceptions) of its style. This is the sort of arraignment, someone will say, that might be drawn up by a rather humorless professor of rhetoric. That is exactly the point: had such a professor gone over the work in manuscript he would have substantially improved it; and Mr. Komroff (who undoubtedly detests professors in general and, to judge from internal evidence in *Coronet,* professors of rhetoric in particular) might perhaps have been forced to clarify to himself the esthetic *raisons d'être* of his book.

Let me recount the fable: that seems the simplest way of showing why, for me, *Coronet* is a failure. The span of its action comprises the period from the High Renaissance to the present day, though the actual narrative centers mainly in the particular years 1600, 1812, 1814, 1849–1850, 1900 and 1919. A superficial unity is secured by inviting the reader to follow the varied fortunes of two objects (which are also symbols): a silver whip which belonged originally to a barbaric prince of the Duchy of Moscow, and a coronet, the property of the Count de Senlis. The careers of the whip and the coronet I can, with considerable effort of the attention, follow, but their fluctuations as symbols are too much for me. Whether they signify the same thing—aristocracy—or whether the whip stands for the arrogant evil implicit in aristocracy and the coronet for the nobility of aristocracy—this I am not sure of. Also, these two objects seem to mean different things for their various owners. For young Rocco, the goldsmith's apprentice, the coronet is a symbol of power, but what it means to the Napoleonic Burin I cannot guess. The whip is an even greater puzzle; I know no more why Napoleon should wield it during his exciting flight from Moscow than I know what song the Sirens sang. I am also bewildered by the fact that various other objects, also, it would seem, of ponderously symbolic value, obtrude themselves in the course of the story (the cross near the Burin estate, the fan painted by Boucher). These seem just as important as the whip and the coronet and yet they enter the tale only for a few chapters. Again, I can understand that Mr. Komroff, when he finally deposits his coronet in the keeping of a vulgar Chicago

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millionaire, has some (to me appallingly obvious) ironic climax in mind; but what has happened to the whip, its peer and companion as a symbol? That whip's final lack of destination is a bit of a bother.

I am forced then, by the cloudiness of the symbolism, to restrict my attention to the actual physical fortunes of coronet and whip. Let us follow these fortunes. In Book I (1600) we see the whip being repaired in a goldsmith's shop in Florence and given to its owner, a young prince of the Duchy of Moscow. The same goldsmith also constructs for the Count de Senlis a beautiful coronet. But the actual content of this first book deals with the rise of the plebeian Rocco who attains every desire except his hunger to own the coronet. I presume Mr. Komroff wishes to show that in 1600 the plebeian soul could not possess the symbol of aristocracy, whereas in 1919 that symbol had become so tarnished that it inevitably gravitated to the twentieth-century counterpart of Rocco, Mallet, the millionaire meat-packer. All I can say is that eight hundred pages make up a rather laborious mechanism for the production of a pretty simple result.

But let us return to our coronets. In Book II (1812) Jobey, an old peasant of Senlis, digs up the coronet from the burying-place to which the Renaissance Count de Senlis had consigned it; and it passes into the hands of the village jeweler, Herpin-Lacroix. Through Herpin-Lacroix we are led into one of the numerous mechanical sub-plots which are introduced by the author, as far as I can see, either to complicate the yarn or because he happens to be interested in writing about them. Herpin-Lacroix has a daughter, Elodie, who goes to Paris to learn singing (and meets the heroine of the sub-sub-plot, the actress, Mademoiselle Georges). She has an affair with one of Napoleon's officers, Captain Robert de Rossel, whom we are to meet again in Russia under quite incredible circumstances. The principal character in this book, however, is old Jobey's son, André, who enlists in Napoleon's Moscow-bound army. André meets up with a Count Burin (a descendant of the Tartar prince of 1600) who has lost his silver whip (correct; this is *the* whip). Let's follow the whip: it has been picked up by a French soldier and given (naturally) to Napoleon who, on his way to Paris, drops it (of all places) at the door of Herpin-Lacroix, the Senlis jeweler, who is also displaying the coronet in his window. But the surprise party has only begun. In Book III (1814) Colonel Burin, still looking for his whip, comes to (three guesses) Senlis —and finds the family heirloom in the Herpin-Lacroix shop. Just to tie things up generally, Mr. Komroff also arranges to have him presented with the coronet. The reader who has been following me closely will now remember that both coronet and whip are in the possession of the Burin family and that there is nothing up my sleeve. But, lest you think Mr. Komroff has mislaid his aristocrats, let me tell you that the Senlis clan is still alive and, before long, will be right up front.

Book IV is concerned with Alex Burin, son of the Napoleonic Colonel. The fact that Alex lives in Paris (1849) gives the author an opportunity to make a big tie-up with a friend of Burin's, who happens to be Chopin, well-known composer. We are now given a free ride: the last days of Chopin are lingered over in pathetic detail and, as an added attraction, we follow the fortunes of Honoré de Balzac, also a friend of Burin. If all this worries you, let me assure you that this summary is much clearer than the book. Besides, we will meet Chopin (or, at any rate, the memory of Chopin) fifty years later —you can see that Mr. Komroff (like the excellent executive he is) never forgets a contact. Alex Burin, the Parisian waster, after Chopin's death, goes back to Russia to claim the whip and coronet from his smug brother, Paul. This trek furnishes the occasion for an interlude (Alex's saintly regeneration and his meeting with the holy ikon painter)

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which is so moving that, amid all this complicated vaudeville jugglery, it stands out with incredible beauty. The interlude does not seem to me to have much connection with the rest of the fable; but, considered as a short story (and by this time the reader will perhaps have guessed that I believe Mr. Komroff's talents lie in the field of the short story rather than the novel) it is one of the most perfect pieces of writing America has produced in the last decade.

Book V (1900) is a tricky one. We now are introduced to two young men who (it's a small world) attend the same university. You have probably already guessed that one of them is Edmond Jobey (grandson of André Jobey, the Napoleonic drummer-boy), now a scion of a wealthy industrial family; and Boris Burin, son of Paul Burin of Book IV. The intrigue at this point is too complicated to go into here. There is much trite talk of the ethic of pain and the supremacy of the intellect which is not excused by the fact that Mr. Komroff pays his respects to Dostoievski and Nietzsche. This is perhaps as bad a place as any to record my feeling that all of the characters without exception talk too much in the windy Slavic style; and that their conversation is about as unnatural as can well be imagined. For proof I refer you back to Napoleon and his hysterico-poetical soliloquy as he rides out of Russia. It is not so much that Mr. Komroff makes Napoleon talk as no one can possibly imagine Napoleon to have talked, but that he makes him talk as no human being, Napoleon or anybody else, could possibly have talked.

I realize that the reader, if he has not already abandoned me, is eying me reproachfully: where are the whip and the coronet? Book VI (1919) supplies the answer in the neatest possible manner. Here we meet Mr. Mallet, Chicago multi-millionaire and Babbitt. (Mr. Komroff owes Mr. Sinclair Lewis royalties on Mallet; at any rate he has defied the copyright regulations.) Mallet has a daughter who falls in love with (remember my promise?) a young impoverished Count de Senlis who is (by the way) good friends with the wealthy Jobey boys, descendants of old Jobey who had (recollect) rifled the tomb of the Senlis family way back in 1812. Hold it for a moment and come with me to Russia where we meet Nicholas Burin, present owner of coronet and whip. He is killed in battle, the coronet (the whip fades out here, as far as I can determine—this simplifies matters) is sold in the Moscow market by two Russian soldiers; and Edmond Jobey (who just happens to be on a business trip in Russia) buys it and gives it to the young Count de Senlis to help him dazzle the Mallets. Thus, all unwitting, de Senlis receives back that same, original coronet which his (approximately) great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather had buried in the family graveyard three hundred years ago. And thus the symbol of aristocracy comes into the hands of the daughter of a vulgar meat-packer. This picturesque climax can be viewed in one of two ways: either as a laborious piece of irony; or as a nice illustration of a bold defiance of the laws of mathematics, inasmuch as the possible chance of young Senlis really getting back this coronet is one in 10^{25}.

No, I have not lost my sense of humor. If Mr. Komroff only were writing a fantastic, Dumas-like romance, the hundred-odd coincidences which provide the framework of his story would be sheer nonsense but nonsense one could, with an amused grin, accept. But *Coronet* is not (or is it?) a romance of intrigue. At times it is a philosophical novel; at other times a serious attempt at historical panorama; then again a bundle of symbolisms; then a tilt at social satire in the Sinclair Lewis vein (except that Mr. Lewis is a satirist and Mr. Komroff is not). *Coronet* tries hard to exist on several elevated levels at once—which reduces the fable to sheer absurdity.

The key to Mr. Komroff's failure, I believe, lies in a statement issued, with a gener-

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ous flourish of pride, by his publishers, who state that before the author wrote his novel he drew a graph, on a large sheet of wrapping-paper, showing each minutest relationship and interlocking of every character and situation. There lies the trouble—this book is not organized. It is diagrammed. It is not functional; the parts do not radiate from a central conception but are joined by ingenious feats of literary carpentry. Thus we find in these pages several beautiful short stories, some fine stretches of narrative writing (the Moscow episode, for example) and an occasional flash of gorgeous mystical feeling (for Mr. Komroff is best when he is most a mystic, that is to say, least a novelist)—but at the heart of the book there is, for me at least, dire confusion or, if one be generous, nothing more than a mechanical coherence. I remain a steadfast admirer of Mr. Komroff's beautiful talents, which I believe lie solely in the domain of the Chekhovian and Tolstoyan short tale; but I cannot bring myself to admit that *Coronet* is much more than a gigantic error which might have been mitigated had it been submitted in manuscript, not to the friendly survey of friends (who have spoiled dozens of books) but to the realistic eye of an experienced and intelligent editor—or even that professor of rhetoric. . . .

CLIFTON P. FADIMAN

THE GREAT MEADOW *by Elizabeth Madox Roberts* (VIKING. $2.50)

WHEN a few seasons ago Miss Roberts first appeared on the literary horizon there were those who hailed her as the most promising of our younger novelists, and it is therefore not to be wondered at that any book of hers should receive instant and sympathetic reading. When in addition her latest novel is also the choice of the Literary Guild for its March book, it is apparent that its reading will not only be sympathetic but widespread. *The Great Meadow* is a tale of pioneer Kentucky, dealing with a young Virginia girl of good family, Diony Hall, who marries and accompanies her husband, Berk Jarvis, across the mountains to found a home in the Kentucky plains. Her husband is falsely believed to be killed by the Indians and Diony marries another man. Then Berk returns and Diony sends both men away, with the understanding that in time she will live again with her first husband. It is a simple story, one which has been told a thousand times, but one which is always effective. Miss Roberts tells it with sympathy. That it would have become under the hand of a great novelist something very much more than it has been made here ought not to blind us, even temporarily, to the merits and even the beauty of Miss Roberts's novel.

Miss Roberts, in the first place, has a keen sense for color and an exquisite feeling for nature, a feeling which she expresses with freshness and poetic imagery. In her writing there are neither solecisms nor clichés. In short, she is both a craftsman and an artist. Then again she has an admirable historic sense. In *The Great Meadow* we feel the country, the time and the people—that is, the people taken generically. We see the fort, we feel the fear of its inhabitants, their courage, their fortitude; the terrain is real, the Indians are real, the fighting, the scalping, the hardships are real. Moreover the writing is vivid and the dialogue always racy and often eloquent without being rhetorical. Why is it then, that judged by the highest standards, *The Great Meadow* fails to satisfy?

The answer is that which must be given to similar questions asked about the work of most modern American novelists. Admirable as many of them are in the non-essentials of the novel, masters as a few of them are of local color, of veracity of dialogue, of external dramatic sense, they fail when brought to the supreme test—that of vividness and inevitability of personality. And in Diony Hall, charming as she is superficially, Miss Roberts fails, just as she fails in the delinea-

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tion of Berk Jarvis, of Diony's father, and of her second husband. When we have laid down the book they seem, despite their adventures, a little vague; not bloodless exactly, but rather as if we were looking at them reflected in a mirror. Moreover we do not feel the struggles of the spirit which they must have undergone. We are told that Diony was of aristocratic blood, and in her father we have a hint or two of the truth of this, yet Diony for all her charm becomes just another pioneer wife. We do not even really believe in her love for Berk, the one thing which would make credible her leaving her father and the past of her family with scarcely a pang. A great novelist would have brought out the epic feeling of the search for the beyond; Miss Roberts speaks often of it, but never do we feel it from the characters themselves. Miss Roberts knows her history, she knows how to write, but she does not yet know the depths of the human heart, nor is she a dramatist in the true sense of the term. She is an artist, but she has not yet learned how to think out her subject and to live her characters until we know that this and this only could have been the story of these characters. The eternal thing which is in them, the thing which binds them to their destiny and to each other, she is not unconscious of, but she is as yet apparently unable to bring it into life. It would be foolish to make this criticism of the ordinary novel, but Miss Roberts, all credit to her, has aimed high, and it is a high standard to which she must be held.

Yet in a day of shoddy fiction, of unimaginative realism, of ignoble offerings to the Great Goddess Lubricity, a book such as *The Great Meadow* is of good omen. Miss Roberts, like Miss Cather, shows that she is interested in things of the spirit. She is a young woman and with the growth of years there ought to come a deepening in psychological insight and a greater intensity of feeling. She is on the main road of literature and she is already an admirable craftswoman. If she keeps out of the little literary bypaths, crowded as they are today with mediocrities and talents which might have matured, she ought to go far.

GRENVILLE VERNON

THE WHISTLERS' ROOM *by Paul Alverdes* (COVICI-FRIEDE. $1.50)

THANKS to the ingenuity of doctors, a bullet through the windpipe does not always mean death. *The Whistlers' Room*, a brief, plotless narrative of four men in a German hospital ward, tells what sometimes happens to men so wounded. The silver tubes set into their necks, through which they breathed and by which they could talk if they kept a finger over the opening, made "a soft, piping note, like the squeaking of mice. . . . Hence they were called . . . the whistlers".

When the bullet hole in their windpipes healed, the new growth of tissue blocked the passage, so that part of their treatment consisted of forcing a rod up and down their painfully constricted throats. When the time came for closing the artificial windpipe, there was a final and extremely delicate operation. Of the four whistlers, one died before he was cured; one died in the final operation; two were healed.

Herr Alverdes has said what he has to say, quietly, without any fuss and feathers, without underlining the hospital horrors which form the background of this extremely touching, straightforward, simple little story. It has none of the scope of such a book as *All Quiet on the Western Front*, but it has the same ring of quiet, desperate, shocking truth.

PURE GOLD *by O. E. Rölvaag* (HARPERS. $2.50)

THE AUTHOR of *Giants in the Earth* and *Peder Victorious* has written another powerful, simple story about simple people and their powerful emotions. *Pure Gold* is a tale

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ıvarice—convincing because it is neither gether horrible nor altogether pathetic, a mixture of the two that is recognizably ıan.

ouis Houglum, the best thresher in his ınesota community, marries Lizzie Öien, ɔod worker, a good cook, intensely ambi- s. They buy a farm, work it as only such ple can work, and prosper. One day Louis ıes back from town with a gold piece. ɛy are fascinated by it, its weight, its th; soon they are misers. No children are n to them; the money becomes their chil- n. To their growing family they sacrifice rything. They learn that disaster follows ɛn they let their babies leave home: Louis s four hundred and fifty dollars in a k failure, Lizzie, one thousand dollars in rooked gold mine. Finally they hit upon scheme of carrying all their wealth in ney belts, in thousand dollar bills: thus y are never separated from their beloved ıily. They grow old, richer and more ɛrable. The gradual shutting in of their vitable end is told without irony, without hos; the author has let the facts speak for mselves, but he has arranged the facts into ·agedy.

OTLOOSE McGARNIGAL *by Harvey ·gusson* (KNOPF. $2.50)

. FERGUSSON's hero goes through all the aresque paces, but is not quite a picar- ue figure. This is a very readable and asant narrative: its general effect is ironic : curiously inconclusive.

Alec McGarnigal has something to do with ɛprints in a New York office. The prospect getting drawn into a mild and ordered stence horrifies him. He has been held in : city a year longer than he would have yed, by an unsatisfactory affair with a girl: ıen she marries and his uncle's legacy gives n an unexpected five hundred dollars, he ·ows up his job and heads West. "Girls re not what he sought but they seemed to be what he found." In Texas he meets an- other girl, not so unsatisfactory, then gets a job with the forestry service, and for a while the out-of-door and purely masculine life soothes him into well-being. But he is foot- loose; he goes to Taos, New Mexico, where he meets the artistic colony, and where an- other girl welcomes him for a night, then up into the mountains to the loneliest post of all, to watch for forest fires. After a few weeks of solitude he comes down into a free- and-easy little community where his only job is to ride the range and look out for tres- passing sheep-herders. As he is increasingly involved with another girl all this time, he is about as much use in his job as a blind man. Finally, when his clandestinities with the latest girl are discovered and he is severely reprimanded for negligence in his duties, he laughs, packs up and rides to the railway, thinking of the telegram he will send the Taos girl (who has meanwhile gone to New York): "Sunburned silent man arriving Thursday. Please save dinner date".

Mr. Fergusson conveys an appetizing sense of physical delights, and a restlessness that will not be content with the humdrum of city life any more than with a pleasantly stupefying existence in the out-of-doors— that craves both, that is satisfied with neither.

T. S. MATTHEWS

DOWN IN THE VALLEY *by H. W. Free- man* (HOLT. $2.50)

MR. H. W. FREEMAN—who established his reputation as a novelist of the soil with the publication of *Joseph and His Brethren*—has reworked his familiar material from a dif- ferent angle in *Down in the Valley*. In the former volume his people were farmers, with an outlook and a range of experience limited by the environment in which they had been born. Here his chief protagonist is a city-bred man, a successful merchant, enchanted al- most by accident with the rural life of a fer- tile valley in Suffolk. Mr. Freeman knows

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and loves the life he describes in *Down in the Valley*. We are not wholly convinced that Everard Mulliver, the wealthy wholesale grocer, would have deserted his business interests and his carefully tended estate to live in a cottage in the valley, to cultivate a garden and prune his fruit trees and follow the plow, to drink beer in the tavern and play quoits with the genial villagers, and to wander in the amorous twilight with the handsome, blooming daughter of a neighboring farmer. We are more than ever unconvinced when Mulliver marries the farmer's daughter and settles down to a life permanently bounded by the necessities of sowing and reaping. But the persuasive qualities of Mr. Freeman's style are sufficient to lull into quiescence our more active suspicions.

Mr. Freeman is perhaps the ablest modern propagandist to arise in defence of the simple country life. We can almost catch, in the pages of *Down in the Valley*, the fragrance of the aromatic herbs in Mulliver's garden; we can almost feel the crisp freshness of dawn breaking over the Suffolk fields, or the glow of welcoming firelight in a cottager's kitchen. For the vivid, sensuous enthusiasm which Mr. Freeman manages to convey to us, we can forgive the faint improbability of the plot and the book's ridiculous climax—Mulliver's fight with the brutal and degenerate Steve Quainton.

NOT ON THE SCREEN *by Henry B. Fuller* (KNOPF. $2.50)

IN THIS, his last novel before his death, Mr. Fuller has taken a popular, romantic and especially improbable moving-picture plot, and exposed it to ridicule by treating it with mock gravity in a novel. Embert Howell, an ambitious country-bred lad, comes to the city to make his fortune. He meets and falls in love with Evelyn Trent, the daughter of a formidable but impoverished dowager. Embert adventures cautiously into fashionable drawing rooms and populous bazaars, gr ally acquiring an urbanity sufficient to ommend him to the dowager's considera In the meantime, Robert Sherrill, a suave villainous young man, a rival aspirant Evelyn's hand, does his best to discredit hero and to wreck his budding career. H circumvented through the aid of Mr. Ja an aristocratic friend of the family, who taken a liking to Embert. Sherrill is ca off to jail just as the wedding march is al to sound for Embert and Evelyn.

Mr. Fuller wavers, at times, betwee desire to render this plot completely ric lous—as, indeed, it is—and a contrary d to establish, against odds, its plausibility. tween the two impulses, the clarity of pose necessary to successful satire esc him. Nevertheless, Mr. Fuller has ta many shrewd and amusing thrusts at foibles of a social world with which h undeniably familiar.

HEIRS *by Cornelia James Cannon* (LIT BROWN. $2.50)

WE ALWAYS await eagerly, but with a cer feeling of trepidation, a second work by author of a more than usually successful : novel. *Heirs*, a second novel by Corn James Cannon, perhaps lacks something the strength and integrity of *Red Rust*, in itself it is by no means disappoint Mrs. Cannon has made no attempt to produce her original triumph in its 'c terms. *Heirs* has a satisfying freshness richness of conception, and it contains, addition, a burden of ideas which mi have crushed a less ingeniously construc tale. Mrs. Cannon's notable ability as dramatist, however, serves to reconcile us the intensity of her sociological preoccu tions.

The scene of her novel is laid in N Hampshire, in a small mill town over with Polish immigrant laborers. Agains picture of older New England life, with

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stern ideals and homogeneous culture—a picture which Mrs. Cannon builds up mainly through suggestion—is placed a view of modern New England, a world whose inherited culture has been sapped by sterility, and threatened with extinction by the influx of cruder, healthier and more fertile peoples. The resulting problems of adjustment and assimilation are concretely proposed in the lives of Marilla Lamprey, the school-teacher in Lovell, and Seth Walton, the owner of an inherited industry which is the principal source of the town's income. Both Marilla and Seth are descendants of old families, both resent in their hearts the crumbling of the old order, and both are too intelligent to oppose it by their actions. Their lives together are contrasted almost brutally with the hardier lives of Ewa and Stanislaw Lewenopski, their Polish factory workers.

It may be urged with justice that Mrs. Cannon has jeopardized the artistic success of her novel by the construction of a too-obvious metaphor. Nevertheless, she has wisely not neglected the development and elucidation of her characters. Marilla and Seth are vital and convincing persons, warmly and immediately involved in the solution of their common problems, and as such the reader is primarily interested in them.

AUSTRALIA FELIX *by Henry Handel Richardson* (NORTON. $2.50)

NOT EVEN the inverse order of their appearance succeeds in diminishing the power of the books which compose the enormous epic of Richard and Mary Mahony. *Australia Felix*, a predecessor to *Ultima Thule*, was published in America in 1917 in abridged form. Here it is complete, and awaits the appearance of the next section, *The Way Home*.

This chronicle of the young manhood of Richard Mahony and the early years of his marriage is a fine, sweeping narrative and contains some memorable descriptive passages. It affords us an unforgettable picture of the development of Australia, the gigantic chaos of the gold rush, and the growth of an immature society. But, as a unit in the history of Richard Mahony, it lacks the power and inevitability of *Ultima Thule*. This, however, is as it should be—since the strength of so ponderous a work lies chiefly in its cumulative effect. It is profoundly to be hoped that, in the near future, the three volumes will be brought out in uniform edition under a single title. In which case—barring those risks which every book must run in the contest with time and obscurity—it may well take its place as one of the outstanding novels in the English language.

MARGARET WALLACE

MOTHERS CRY *by Helen Grace Carlisle* (HARPERS. $2.50)

THIS IS the tale of a simple creature who bears four children; when they grow up, one is killed by her brother, one is electrocuted for killing his sister, one becomes a famous architect, and one becomes a simple creature like her mother. It is all meant to be highly affecting, and so far as the facts are concerned, it is. Unfortunately the style is self-consciously simple. The heroine, that is the mother, tells it in the first person. She speaks like a stupid person who is pretending to be even more stupid than she really is. Describing her daughter-in-law, she observes: "On account of her bottom lip being thick and hangy she looked like some children I used to see in an asylum when I lived down near Third Avenue who weren't so smart as most children but had something the matter with their minds". Throughout the book she gives in to the tantrums of her son Danny, condones his thefts after halting reproofs, eyes him with maudlin affection no matter what he does, seems completely oblivious to the importance of his failings until he finally becomes a gangster and a murderer. Miss Carlisle's work is saturated with a sentimentality that is more than a matter of poor taste; it

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leads to a complete reversal of ethical values. At the end, having by her lack of character helped make her son fit only for the electric chair, the heroine says: "I had my struggle and I had my suffering and I was rich with struggle for I was rich with life". Apparently we are to believe that the process of going through the normal physical stages of being alive is so delightful that we have a right to be smug no matter how criminally foolish we are. *Mothers Cry* should be kept away from all growing mothers.

GEOFFREY T. HELLMAN

THREE CAME UNARMED *by E. Arnot Robertson* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

ANY book which engages to tell a story and does it smartly is welcome in a season when the dreary and dispirited records of shabby lives pass current as fiction. Miss Arnot Robertson's *Three Came Unarmed* is delightful as a story. She has—it was apparent in her quieter first book, *Cullum*—a nice feeling for contrasts and can get good drama out of minor situations. In this book she has a better subject and more spectacular material, and she has a most engaging style.

But *Three Came Unarmed* is more than a story. It is a conveyance for some of Miss Arnot Robertson's ideas about civilization, and as such it is rather disturbing. The children—two boys and a girl—of a missionary to Borneo who has drunk himself to death, come from the primitiveness in which they have grown up to the home of their aunt and cousin in England. They are Noble Savages; they combine the cunning of aborigines with special Nordic aptitudes for machinery and the like. After the nine days' wonder at their beauty and strangeness is over, civilization wrecks them. Civilization, in the shape of a mob of workingmen, kills the eldest, Herel. In the shape of perverts and tricksters, it exploits and imprisons the youngest (who is a cad judged by any standards, as his creator must know). In the shape of a scientist too engrossed in his work to be quite human, it breaks the girl-savage's heart.

Unfortunately for her thesis, Miss Arnot Robertson's indictment of civilization fails because she tampers with the evidence. If she had been willing to be as fair to the civilized way of life as she is to the savage, her book would have been no less poignant, and certainly far better. But the types she chooses to represent civilization are, on the one hand, fools, and, on the other, neurotic sophisticates. The aunt with whom the children take refuge is a dull intellectual climber, and her daughter a dull conservative. The two ironically sympathetic friends to whom the young savages cling (and whom Miss Arnot Robertson fully approves) are a cripple who has made a thorough mess of her life and the sub-human scientist whom Nonie loves. Any honest and straightforward person would shine against such a background; the Wild Ones dazzle.

Further, by representing Nonie as having been unsuccessfully assaulted by a hideous old native when she was a child in Borneo, the author has her heroine shrinking at sex, fearful of love—although she eventually capitulates—in very much the same fashion as the other women in the book, who are so hysterical and so tiresome and who prove so conclusively that civilization is evil. Yet the same attitude in Nonie, by some magic, is is very noble and very touching and very sad.

There is material here for a fine book, but it did not get written. To write it would have been to admit that civilization is not all the work of Satan, nor the life of nature God's own way of life. And that was more than Miss Arnot Robertson was prepared to acknowledge.

DOROTHEA BRANDE

THE VOYAGE HOME *by Storm Jameson* (KNOPF. $2.50)

THE second panel in a trilogy whose ultimate importance will very likely be sociological rather than dramatic is *The Voyage*

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'ome. For Miss Jameson has endeavored and ill in all probability continue to endeavor, the three volumes telling the story of lary Hervey, to trace the rise and decline the ship-building industry on the North :a coast of England, a cycle that was coëval ith the triumph and fall-off of the Victo- an Age. The real importance of the trilogy) literature should be in its measure of the spirations, the growth, the disappointments ıd the lapsing into death of a strong-minded 'oman of industry; but, in *The Voyage lome* it is apparent that the sociology has etrayed the drama inherent in Mary Her- ey's career. Stark Young has objected that *'he Forsyte Saga* fails in the last analysis ecause Galsworthy, whose attention was ndoubtedly diverted by his sociological lea, simply left the big scenes uncreated. 'he objection may not have been wholly ıst (the close of *The Man of Property* is ramatic enough); but, if a similar objection 'ere made of *The Voyage Home*, it would e entirely apropos.

Miss Jameson has an excellent narrative tyle and a lovely penchant for sub-aqueous ints in her descriptions. She can "tell" with he best of them, but she fails to "show" in dramatic sense. In *The Voyage Home* Mary Hervey, through an overindulgence of he possessive instinct, loses her hold on her on and one of her daughters, and evidently egains a husband. Meanwhile her shipbuild- ng industry is passing through a period of tress. But no portion of the story of all this s clinched esthetically. Miss Jameson keeps ıopping about, now telling of the son's love ffair with a poor and pretty relation, now ollowing the wilful daughter Sylvia on her ınfortunate runaway marriage excursion, ınd now going back to Mary Hervey's wor- ies about son, daughter, husband and ship- ›uilding. The result is an unfleshed skeleton ›f a history. No single phase of it gets a leserved measure of effect.

No doubt Miss Jameson's attempt to ride wo horses at once, to give us the account of Tees-side shipping and to set before us the dramatic phases of Mary Hervey's life, is an attempt at a very difficult feat. But *The Voyage Home* could have been filled out, enriched, dramatized. If Miss Jameson would go to school to the Tolstoy of *Anna Karenina*, and let the Forsytes drift behind her, her art should pick up immensely.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

HANSINE SOLSTAD *by Peter Egge* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

ONE OF the latest Scandinavian importations is Peter Egge, whose chronicle of a Norwegian servant girl is free from the drabness and stolidity which often taint the sagas of the simple. Hansine is of ancient farming stock, and proud of her heritage. As a child she is maliciously accused of thievery. The rumor clings to her like an insidious odor and, though she fights it with tight-lipped tenacity, it shapes and warps the whole course of her life. Spiritually she is victorious, but she dies wondering what meaning God has in reserve.

Peter Egge is a realist of the better sort. His descriptions of the serene and Spartan life of the farmlands, of the small bustling villages and towns, have a freshness and veracity which are wholly charming. But the distinction of the book lies in his portrait of Hansine. Egge has a sense of values. His heroine is inarticulate, comparatively uneducated, but he makes one feel very keenly the sturdiness of her fibre and the nobility of her struggle. It is the spiritual integrity of Hansine which colors the whole novel, and lifts it above the narrowly provincial.

JOY IS MY NAME *by Sarah Salt* (BREWER & WARREN. $2.50)

THIS tale of a pitiful, pleasure-loving little moron might, in less competent hands, be merely dreary. At seventeen Joy has a pretty face, a craving to be an actress, no brains and

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no talent. Dismissed from a tawdry repertory company because Maurice, the leading man, incautiously makes love to her, she struggles frantically to get a theatrical job in London, permits herself to be seduced as a means of getting train-fare home and is savagely rebuffed by her own mother—to whom she has been almost abnormally attached. Still mesmerized by the flashy charms of Maurice, she finally succumbs to them, and prepares to share with him a life so hideously sordid that Miss Salt contents herself with discreet hints as to its probable course.

This, in other words, is realism—of a particularly racy and uncompromising variety. Miss Salt is not in the least sentimental about her heroine. She recounts Joy's adventures coolly and baldly, with no attempt at commentary. Her clipped, unadorned dialogue is always deftly in character and serves in place of description. She is, obviously, an expert technician. One feels, however, that in her novel emotion is too rigorously controlled—that she has not quite been able to evoke by indirection the full pathos of fumbling and anchorless mediocrity.

EDITH WALTON

A ROMAN HOLIDAY *by Don Ryan* (MACAULAY. $2.50)

IN *A Roman Holiday* Don Ryan has essayed an almost impossible task and handled it with a richness of sensitivity, a natural comprehension of the dramatic and a vivid realization of characterization. To say that he has been completely successful would be untrue, for to have been completely successful he would have been compelled to write a novel as long as Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, a novel including hundreds of figures and scenes and sweeping like an arc over this pulsating and feverish continent; but within his limitations (some of them deliberately self-set and others the result of a climbing and ambitious talent that has not quite fused with its material as yet) he has created an astonishing approximation of the philosophical thesis he set himself. He is indebted Spengler for his thesis. Briefly, *A Roma Holiday* pictures that dance of death, th saraband of the senses, that saturnalia of tl sexes that is agitating our modern world. the personalities of two characters, Dia Hunter, a Hollywood screen actress, ar Thomas Egan, her lover, Spengler's theory the decline of the West is acted out. Holl wood studios, race-tracks, and all the plac where the sensually sophisticated gather, a depicted during the course of the novel ar through these places walk all the varyir types that make up this latter-day Roma holiday. Mr. Ryan's construction is loose times. His pace is unequal. But through it a there is manifested a dynamic sincerity th clutches and controls the reader. So excelle a work from so young a writer (this is b Mr. Ryan's second book) is a fair promi for finer achievements to follow.

HERBERT GORMA

THE NO-NATION GIRL *by Evans Wa* (CENTURY. $2.50)

THIS novel presents the dual forces in the gi Precieuse, child of a white father and a negr mother. The scene is laid in the swamp country of Louisiana, where the black mingle strangely with the white flotsam an jetsam who have drifted along the mudd rivers from the great "outside". The cha acters, moving against a background uniqu and interesting chiefly because it is unknow to the average reader, have all yielded to th spell cast by the swamp—Cliff Dale, high strung, sensitive, and lovable despite his lac of moral or mental stamina; Precieuse, beau tiful and pathetic; Albert Lamarque, th girl's father, with only his yellowed letter his French dagger, his faded pictures, and hi prayer book to link him to the French Quar ter of New Orleans; Dr. Burchell, the dru addict, who has fled from the ethics of hi profession and the code of his wife to th solace of the swamp and the loyalty of a half

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ed girl; the white laborers of the lumber ips; and the negroes holding to their tribal toms, their primitive instincts and their al superstitions.

The story moves swiftly with a verisimili- e unquestioned during the reading. The rring of the two sets of instincts within cieuse is convincingly portrayed. Even hout the author's repetitious insistence t the Caucasian strain predominates in the t cycle of the development of the no-nation e to be obliterated by the African traits t later rise in ascendency, the reader would ept Precieuse's final yielding to the sav- e's love of physical strength. The utter ab- ice of moral code among the blacks and strange standards of the white men, who ndone the taking of various negro girls for night but place beyond the pale a man io is loyal to one no-nation girl whom he ves, seems plausible enough. Yet, with the eathless reading of the story ended, doubt mes that negroes anywhere have cruelty as dominant characteristic. In its end also the ory is unconvincing. Though the scene has en set and the plot carefully developed for timate tragedy, the suicides of Cliff Dale id Precieuse are employed as a means of rminating a story, the logical ending of hich would have been too devastating for ie friendly reader.

BACKWATER *by T. S. Stribling* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

ANOTHER bit of realism concerning the South nd its people has come from the pen of T. S. Stribling, that daring iconoclast who ever pauses to pick up the remnants of the dols he smashes. The scene of *Backwater* hifts from Mr. Stribling's Tennessee hills to he Arkansas country reached by the back- water of the ruthless Mississippi River. The heme of the novel reiterates the well-known feud in which certain celebrated Capulets and Montagues once figured. The part of Romeo Montague is played by James Murdock and Juliet Capulet appears as Mary Sue Meredith. Variation, however, is furnished in the disparity between the social positions of the Murdocks and the Merediths. James's father is a bootlegger scorned by the elder Meredith not merely because of a disputed boundary line but also by reason of the illegal, though enviably profitable, nature of his profession, and because of the unfortunate circumstance of humble birth.

The story of Jim's successful conquest of Mary Sue is told with breath-taking rapidity from its incipiency on the train that brought the two principals home from college to the eventuation that followed the inundation of their adjoining farms. The plot contains good old-fashioned melodrama handled in a dashing manner. The tempo of the story is rapid, and careful preparation is made for the flood and for the elder Meredith's complicity in crime, which bring about Mary Sue's final surrender to Jim Murdock.

Beneath the mechanism, however, the South is veraciously pictured. Old Bill Jack Murdock, Jim's father, with his utter disregard for the law as written upon the Arkansas statute books, his innate kindliness and courage, his own code of ethics from which he brooks no deviation, is a character certainly drawn from life. Mary Sue's father, the aristocrat, in whose crimes there is a fine sense of the decorum expected of a Southern gentleman, runs delightfully untrue to his prototype in fiction of other years. Mary Sue and Jim, however, are faintly drawn. They are simply young collegians who might fit comfortably into almost any setting.

Throughout the book Mr. Stribling hurls his humorous shafts toward the farce of prohibition enforcement in the South, toward the myth of Southern aristocracy and the ancestor worshippers, and succeeds in levelling the Merediths of the manor with the Murdocks whom illicit distilleries have lifted to social and political prominence. Though his characters seem to be pawns moved hither and thither to prove their maker's theses,

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they play in a swift and gripping drama, real despite its cinematic qualities. Southerners, pleased to see in *Backwater* less of caricature than they found in *Teeftallow* and *Bright Metal*, are forced to admit that T. S. Stribling's latest novel depicts truthfully a phase of the South in these halcyon days of prohibition.

EUDORA RAMSAY RICHARDSON

A HOUSE IS BUILT *by M. Barnard Eldershaw* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.50)

COLLABORATION, that delicate and dubious practice, has scored another point in *A House Is Built*, written by the hands of two ladies of the antipodes, Barnard and Eldershaw. Published as the work of one person, this novel has lately been awarded a considerable prize, and would appear to have received much honor in England, and even in its own country. Stripped clear of the publisher's enthusiasms, however, it is discovered to be a sound and solid enough tale of English family tradition, transplanted to Australia and flourishing in a commercial atmosphere. The book narrates the rise to wealth and prestige of James Hyde, a retired naval quartermaster; and the fashion in which the Hyde name and business became the dominating factor in the lives of his children.

Old Hyde commenced to build his house in the 'forties. As well as an undeniable business acumen, he possessed the traditional concepts of woman's place and of filial submission. In the early years of the Australian settlement, his son William opposed the paternal dictatorship, but submitted at length through a magnified sense of duty, which quality went further to cement the stones of the house of Hyde than any of the thundered pronouncements of his choleric father.

Of the two daughters, Maud escaped the family tradition by marrying into the household of Hyde's chief competitor. Her elder sister Fanny, a forceful woman of commercial aptitude, was prevented from partici ing in the business on grounds of "femi unfitness"; her energies being frustratec every turn by her father's or brother's r culinity.

Brother William brought his affianced Adela from England: a quiet creature wl individuality was threatened by the neces of being a Hyde. She avoided this by sively slipping into the background; acqu cent and subdued she permitted them to t her first son, James, from her, as the destined furtherer of the Hyde fortunes. I second child, Lionel, being after a man unneeded, was permitted to grow up in care, free from the Hyde obligation. But e he, when loss and sorrow overtook the fa ily, set aside his freedom for the task of ma taining a tradition, as exemplified by Hyde business, for which he had no espec love, and in which he had no especial beli

That the lives of people should go to fo an idea which dims and flickers out thus scurely is tragedy of a quite exquisite ord

SPIDER WEB *by Marjorie Muir Worthington* (CAPE & SMITH. $2.50)

HEDWIG MENDELSOHN of Hedwig Mendsohn and Sons, Milliners, ruled her home grimly as she ruled her business. Unscrup lous, cruel, insensitive, she sat like some obe spider at the heart of a dingy web, pleasu ably contemplative of the lessening struggl of flies there enmeshed. Hedwig in the da of her prosperity lived in a brownstone hou on Mount Morris Park; under her roof an partaking of a doubtful bounty, lived h worthless, dissipated sons, her suppressed an scrawny elder daughter, Dora, and the vixe ish younger one, Fanny. In time the Me delsohn matriarchy recruited another unit, little, a so-mild mannered young man name Max Bickof, whose timid and tentative e forts to secure an M.D. certificate, with proportionate education in the humanite perished on the day of his marriage to Dora

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Poor Max, warm-hearted and foolishly sentimental, was taken into the business and made a salesman of feathers and fal-lals.

Time passed. By the dishonesty of a favorite son Hedwig's business collapsed, and Hedwig herself was relegated to her bed, where she lay for twenty years and ruled the destiny of the Bickof household. Max, the inarticulate Job of this petty chronicle, slaved through the decades, giving his dependants all that they demanded; observing with equal unrelish his wife's increasing girth and his own encroaching baldness; resigned to the parasitical attitude of his two elder daughters, and confused by the individualism of the youngest, Miriam, whose ideals hark back to the forgotten precepts of his youth. Bloated with years, Hedwig died, leaving a half-victory in the hands of Max, who found in the self-liberation of Miriam a symbol of return, and the end of vicious forces.

It is admirably done. There is an economy of phrasing, a fine restraint in Miss Worthington's English which makes for good writing. One might say, trumping a metaphor, that there is sufficient silver in the casting to make it ring true.

LEO KENNEDY

SPIRALS *by Aaron Marc Stein* (COVICI-FRIEDE. $2.50)

A RELIABLE dictionary defines the word "spiral" as a curve that continually recedes from a center. Make the curves mental and adolescent, and you get a fair idea of this novel's theme. In the words of its author it deals with "all this stewing around and worrying about what I am, what is happening to me, why and so on". Metaphysics, the play of muscles, pranks, parties, the ultimate and the ego—you get them all milling around in the mind of Tony Todd during his three years as a student at Princeton. You get them, moreover, as they appear in his conscious, unconscious and subconscious. That is, you get his dreams in detail and also his vain efforts to recollect them when he awakes. The result for the reader is apt to be easily summed up in a quotation from the narrative: "Hell. It's all so confusing. And I'm damned sleepy". For example:

"I want you to meet a couple of friends".

"Here. I'll introduce you. Alice meet the pudding. Pudding meet Alice".

"Now you can't eat them. You're a Laestrygonian, you know".

"Alice and the pudding. Alice and the pudding. Alice the One. In contact with the pudding. The many. Puddings always the many. Like hash. All mixed up together. Chaos".

That is, looking at it with all possible fairness, neither good sense nor good Gertrude Stein. And yet, though Mr. Stein's matter and manner fairly exasperate an adult with an ear for euphony, it must be confessed that there is a certain quality about this book. Tony Todd is sensitive, intelligent, an artist. His best friend, Sandy, dies in his first year. Tony paints his portrait from memory in his last term at Princeton. He knows that for him personally this achievement is significant; that it gives point to the suffering he endured at the death, and that it is itself part of the "mighty rhythm of the arc of energy departing from the One and returning to it." Mr. Stein has a real theme in the mental development of Tony Todd. It is not a new theme except in so far as every individual is "new." But by failing to mass his material either subjectively or objectively, the author unfortunately leaves his portrait of Tony obscure to a point which threatens to make it imperceptible to all but the most optimistic and determined onlookers.

NORAH MEADE

DIDO, QUEEN OF HEARTS *by Gertrude Atherton* (LIVERIGHT. $2.50)

MRS. GERTRUDE ATHERTON compels admiration for the manner in which she ranges over the wide regions of history as others (and, in-

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deed, she herself in other moods) traverse the more physical realms of geography. She takes us back a mere two or three thousand years with the greatest composure and confidence, and steers an admirable course between the stilted language with which so many authors adorn an ancient vocabulary, and the worse pitfall of modern Americanisms, although she is at times engagingly colloquial. "Oh, what a little beast I am," says the penitent Elissa to her first husband, Sychæus. And Elissa, or Dido, with her loves, her ambitions, her passions and her tears lives in these pages as a very human being, having some of those qualities of fairyland that are necessary to such a tale as this, but nevertheless retaining a living realism that is essential to the best fairy tales.

In a brief appendix, Mrs. Atherton says, a little slyly, that she has "accepted the chronology of Virgil, for he perhaps knew as much about it as we do to-day. . . . Moreover . . . what else could I do? Far be it from me to insult the memory of one of the Immortals". In other words, we may take it, she has chosen the most romantic version of an ancient story and clothed it once more in living raiment.

The story is of Elissa, and the treachery of her brother Pygmalion, who, knowing Sychæus to possess a vast treasure, had him murdered in a vain effort to gain it; of how Elissa, henceforth to be known as Dido, gathered together her noble Phœnicians and, by trickery, took them and the whole of Pygmalion's fleet; of how she took the treasure as well, and set out to establish the city of Carthage, with herself as its most beautiful queen; of how in three years the city grew to magnificence; of how Æneas, the Trojan goddess-born prince, was wrecked on her shores and took her to wife; of how Mercury, the winged god, appeared to him and bade him leave fair women and go about the business of founding a kingdom for his son; and of how he hearkened to the voices and left his wife desolate. Then came Iarbus, the black king of Libya, demanding Dido for wife. Rather than yield herself or her people, she fell upon a sword and died.

The story is told with a wealth of detail and color, and must be counted another of Mrs. Atherton's successes.

ESTHER HYMAN

THE UNDER DOGS *by Mariano Azuela* (BRENTANO. $2.50)

THIS book deserves an adjective that should be used sparingly for books. It is a terrific novel. And beautiful in a singular way. Azuela, the Mexican physician who fought in Villa's revolution, has appropriately been compared to Gorki. He has experienced at first hand the fellowship of men who kill other men as casually, as coldly, as they shoot rabbits or wild turkeys. "When I was up at Torreon," says one of the soldiers, "I killed an old lady who refused to sell me some *enchiladas*. She was angry, I can tell you; I got no *enchiladas* but I felt satisfied anyhow." But more than that, Azuela has also felt the terrible exaltation of their pure savagery. In the purity of their brutishness resides the strange fascination of this work. In their blindness as destroyers, they arouse pity. Graphically, swiftly, Azuela follows the bloody doings of Demetrio Macías and his bandits. The themes are slaughter and looting and ravishing, and there is no exhausting the crude lusts of these soldiers engaged in a revolution for the joy of it, not for any political aim. *The Under Dogs* tells us that genuine literary power is being unleashed south of the Rio Grande.

GORHAM B. MUNSON

RED WILLOWS *by Constance Lindsay Skinner* (COWARD-MCCANN. $2.00)

THE men in Constance Lindsay Skinner's *Red Willows* came out to British Columbia in search of gold. They were unsuccessful, but they did not have sufficient money to re-

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turn to their homes, and determined to remain and force an existence from the soil. They had come from all parts of the world, and one of their greatest difficulties was to divorce themselves emotionally from their former environments. "Instead of letting go and having one grand time with it, you're all holding on like grim death to what they taught you in your dear old homes." It is this stubborn loyalty to the "Old Country" which causes continual friction and prevents coöperation.

The central character of the book is Lucy Paley, a Scotswoman married to a Spaniard; she, for her subtlety and irresistible charm, is loved by everybody, so that no one in the community realizes her lust for possession and the absorbing desire for attention which instigates all her kindliness. She, too, clings to all her old home-associations, immediately Anglicizes her husband's Spanish name and does all in her power to resist anything native in him.

Around her numbers of men and women are introduced, but the panorama is so vast that they on the whole remain unreal and indistinct. But *Red Willows* is certainly worth reading for the skill and subtlety with which the interplay between exiled men and women of many nationalities is shown.

K. GWENDA DAVID

CANDLES IN THE SUN *by Dorothy Graham* (STOKES. $2.50)

ONCE again Florence serves as scene for American-Italian play and counter-play, but in this novel there is none of the languorous and poetic atmosphere so strongly stressed by the tourist agencies. In fact, the American visitors and residents are portrayed as rather feeble candles flickering beneath the powerful sunrays of Italian practicality. There is Miss Mallory who is seeking beauty—she thinks—but finds it is love she needs, and then loses it. There is also Jane Trent, eighteen years old, who wants romance without annoying consequences. She would have been skilfully married to Gino by his cousin Gisela (the Italian family's depleted coffers had to be replenished) if an unfortunate lunch with an opera tenor in a private room had not started a scandal which even dollars could not allay. Trent *père* collects baggage labels. Mrs. Trent plays bridge. All the stock characters are here, but it is to Miss Graham's credit that she has presented them in a new light. She has subtitled the book "a satire in pastels", and that is exactly what it is—a satire of delicacy, without barbs to its shafts.

EDMUND KENNEDY

FIVE SISTERS *by Violet Kazarine* (COVICI-FRIEDE. $2.50)

MISS KAZARINE'S five women are real in the sense that if one met one of them one would say, "My dear, she's just like a character out of a novel". One of them writes scandalous books, one has tuberculosis, one drinks, one dresses well, and the fifth "goes to market". For the most part the action centers about an interchange of husbands and lovers that results in what might be called Soul States. There is much smart conversation.

Even granting the author's premise that these are startling and exalted women one cannot take this book seriously as a penetrating study of the feminine mind. For every time a crisis gives an opportunity for some genuine penetration, the author becomes either romantic or banal. None the less, it is interesting reading.

PAUL ALLEN

THE CLOSING HOUR *by Norah Hoult* (HARPERS. $2.50)

ACCORDING to some the average man is divine. Sinclair Lewis has found him chiefly a fool; to Edgar Lee Masters he is a distorted, mean and low-spirited creature; and Miss Hoult, in her second novel, *The Closing Hour*, finds him merely tedious. The story is built on

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the barest plot. William Carmichael, a shiftless London solicitor, after losing his wife's love and almost all his business, takes to liquor and to companionship with a bachelor friend whose death comes as a devastating experience.

Miss Hoult writes a simple, stark type of realism with great emphasis on details. After presenting several days of wrangling home life, of drinking bouts, of scenes around London, she ends the book without any climax or solution. It is just a series of episodes, all of which are depressing. Carmichael's quarrels with his wife, his long conversations with his bibulous companions, his feeble efforts to improve his business condition, his arrest, finally, while in a maudlin state of drunkenness over Powell's death—all are told painstakingly but to no great purpose.

The virtues of the book, despite their paucity, are real enough: Miss Hoult's style, clear and pointed and fluent, is worthy of commendation; her familiarity with life from a masculine point of view is unquestionably distinctive. But the novel remains valuable solely for its style. Mere realism, no matter how photographic, is not enough. *The Closing Hour* lacks purpose and plot and that discipline of structure which gives finish to a story and satisfaction to a reader.

THE HOAX *by Italo Svevo* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $2.00)

THIS short novel by an Austro-Italian is the story of Mario Samigli, the mild-tempered and credulous author of an unsuccessful novel, and of how he was duped into believing an Austrian publisher had bought the worthless book which he had so long cherished.

Against the background of Mario's life, serene in its resignation to writing silly fables about the sparrows in the courtyard and to attending an invalid brother, the perpetration of this hoax by Gaia, a wine salesman, gives Svevo the opportunity to make use of the gentlest irony.

The plot is inconsequential, but the telling has about it something to excite the admiration of any reader. Poor old Mario, writing about his sparrows, believing himself a great author, never suspecting his ineffectualness, is rudely shaken from his dreams and his serenity by this monstrous trick. His mind is filled with strange restlessness. His life becomes a series of torments. The solution of the story by which Mario receives a large sum of money unexpectedly, shows Svevo's unwillingness to have his character's experience become a tragedy. We feel no great pity: Svevo is too kind to the old fellow for that. And the irony with which he so deftly and so gracefully depicts the old man's passion and disappointment is strikingly like that of Daudet, not of Anatole France nor of the stark Maupassant.

The author, we are told in the translator's preface, died in 1928 as a result of an automobile accident. In his lifetime he enjoyed little recognition save in the eyes of James Joyce and certain French writers whom Joyce knew in Paris. These contacts, if *The Hoax* is typical, whatever they meant personally to him, did not influence his work in the direction of Joyce's experiments.

The book's scene is small, its action simple. But its artistry and its finesse are undeniable. It makes us curious to read *La Coscienza di Zeno*, soon to appear in English.

ALAN BURTON CLARKE

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BIOGRAPHY

WALTHER RATHENAU *by Count Harry Kessler* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $3.75)

THE Walther Rathenau known to this country is that brilliant businessman-statesman who was one of the first of Germany's post-war leaders to accept the inevitable results of the war and attempt to put into effect the "policy of fulfillment". We remember that it was in pursuit of this policy that he met his tragic death at the hands of a political assassin, leaving to another representative of the industrial class, Gustav Stresemann, the hard task of bringing his program to its final fruition in Germany's acceptance of the Young Plan.

The public life of this man is told interestingly and well by Count Kessler, with an illuminating chapter on the memorable conference at Genoa. But there was also another Rathenau—the proud and sensitive Jew, philosopher and social reformer—whose tragic life was a perpetual conflict "between an unquenchable desire for the pure life of the spirit and a mysterious, irresistible urge towards commercial and technical activity, and outward material success". It is this Rathenau in whom Count Kessler is primarily interested, and the story of the bitter struggle of his life, so symbolic of the conflict in our modern civilization between things of the spirit and things material, gives to this biography an unusual significance.

It is hard to understand the strange and contradictory character of Rathenau. Some idea of his power and influence may be gained from the knowledge that he was head of the German General Electric Company and a director in eighty-six German and twenty-one foreign enterprises, that he organized Germany's control of her raw materials in the first days of the war, and that after the peace he was first Minister of Reconstruction and then Minister of Foreign Affairs. But at the same time he had the broadest intellectual interests and was a profound thinker. He had the courage, despite his own position of great wealth, to advance theories for the reform of the capitalist system which go beyond socialism. He sought to remove property rights as an obstacle "to the free unfolding of man's soul".

Count Kessler writes understandingly and sympathetically of this interesting personality. His book is one of ideas fully as much as it is one of action. Seldom does a biography appear so soon after its subject's death in which character is analyzed with the perspective and careful judgment which Count Kessler brings to his study of Rathenau.

FOSTER RHEA DULLES

LINCOLN *by Emil Ludwig* (LITTLE, BROWN. $5.00)

AS IS well known to more readers than one, Emil Ludwig has, in the past, applied the method of Rembrandt to the writing of biography: he has used the detail that ordinarily constitutes background in such a way as to make a darkened blur from which the face of whatever portrait he is painting stands out in startling relief. It is not the sort of writing that endears itself to historians, but that is no great matter, for its intent is to complement history. For my own part, I think the method is absolutely justified when, as was the case with Ludwig's *Bismarck*, the author doesn't make a fool of himself by quoting from the subject's letters, diaries or

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what not, and then proceed to belabor the obvious by telling over again, with an air of profundity, what has just been set down within quotation marks.

But his *Lincoln*, it is sad to report, is another story. Here Ludwig ceases to be the intelligent guide. Instead, he appears as the showman. Realizing that he has a sure-fire sentimental subject, he is at pains to put his exhibit forward in nothing but a favorable light. The result is at times ludicrous. The book becomes a series of quotations from Lincoln's speeches, letters and comments to his friends, interspersed with some extraordinarily insensitive "interpretation" by Mr. Ludwig.

And yet, with all his unnecessary comment (for Lincoln's words pretty generally speak eloquently for themselves), Mr. Ludwig has not been able to spoil his story. His Lincoln is still recognizable, for the Kentuckian's actions and words belie Mr. Ludwig's interpretation at critical points. Lincoln was not always a visitor to this earth from Mount Olympus, and Mr. Ludwig's eternally laudatory deductions fail to make him over into the stuff of Zeus. The result is a human Lincoln in spite of the author's attitude.

MYRON T. HERRICK *by Colonel T. Bentley Mott* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $5.00)

A BIOGRAPHY of this sort about any less admirable person than Myron Herrick would be unpalatable, for it is in the old style of pious remembrance. In the case of Herrick, whose character (in the old New England sense of the term) was worthy of plenty of admiration, it is acceptable—but only as spade work and as news. Truthfully, the book is not "the engrossing history of a great American"; it is merely a small fraction of what could be shaped into the engrossing history of a fine American. What Colonel Mott tells us, or lets Herrick tell us, about the McKinley campaign in Ohio in 1896 is so interesting that one wants the whole thing. We have Herrick's own word for it that he played an important part in the campaign, for, as one banker to another, he was able to persuade J. Pierpont Morgan that McKinley was really in favor of a gold standard; and he was instrumental in arranging a meeting between the New York financier and Mark Hanna. He was, according to these conversations with Colonel Mott, partially responsible for Roosevelt getting a place in the first McKinley cabinet as assistant secretary of the Navy.

The McKinley campaign has been retold for us by Thomas Beer in his *Hanna*, and the Great War is now thundering about our ears in every publisher's direction. But Beer's books are always more notable for their extremely interesting points of view than they are for undistilled, unquintessentialized facts; and Herrick's part in the early days of the war, when he helped hundreds of Americans who were stranded abroad and did valuable work in organizing the American Hospital, was unique, if not precisely in line with President Wilson's idea of "moral" neutrality. There is, therefore, room for an "engrossing history" of Herrick, a history that will include Colonel Mott's pioneering as an ambassador's amanuensis, and much more besides.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

GEORGE WASHINGTON—1777-1781 *by Rupert Hughes* (MORROW. $5.00)

IN THIS, the third volume of his *Life of Washington*, Mr. Hughes marches the General successfully from Trenton to Yorktown and a few days beyond. His first volume seemed to indicate that the Father of his Country was doomed to failure as a parent. The second developed hopes; indeed Mr. Hughes lowered his colors in salute. There are times in the present tome when one fears there is to be a fatal slip-up. The American Fabius would appear often to be rash and reckless, but he gets past his blunders. At times Mr. Hughes finds him passionate and savage; again supremely patient, especially with an

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"insolent" young man named Alexander Hamilton, with whom it is certain Mr. Hughes himself will have to be more tolerant if he keeps on trailing the great Virginian, as he seems certain to do.

The volume is intensely interesting and at the same time curiously variable. Critical of his subject to the last degree, Mr. Hughes is even more so of the men around him. Like the chameleon, he takes color from the ground he traverses. He has gone over an enormous quantity of material with a fine-toothed comb, and has picked up much insect life. Questioning ever and captiously Washington's acts, he, like all others, bows under the compelling force of his great character. After some two thousand pages of combings have been sorted out, often with disdain at the discoveries, Mr. Hughes succumbs to the final facts. He can hardly believe that the American revolution succeeded, and thinks that it never did "in the way it was meant to at the beginning"—which is a bit cryptic. He shall be forgiven for all he meant to do when he started to evaluate Washington for this handsome confession of early misconception: "The meekness with which he endured, while denouncing his masters, the people, gives him a saintliness unique among great soldiers and creators of nations", while "the more I study it, the more I marvel at Washington's greatness and patience and his genius. He was not at all the Washington that is taught in the schools. He was far greater than that bland miracle worker. He was infinitely human, incessantly guessing wrong, making innumerable false prophecies, countless mistakes, losing his temper, regaining it, being coërced into defeats and dragged away from them, driven into victories in spite of himself and driving others to heights they could not otherwise have attained". Thus he is found to be "eternally fascinating and various" and so difficult to leave alone! Despite this disparaging estimate—for disparaging enough it is—Washington won the last battle, which is the most that can be expected of any general. Mr. Hughes is to be respected for vast research and an earnest desire to make the man greater by depicting him minutely as human. This is his apologia for saying much that floats away in the end.

DON C. SEITZ

GEORGE WASHINGTON *by Shelby Little* (MINTON, BALCH. $5.00)

HISTORIANS in recent years, like the naïve adolescent who begins to doubt Jonah and the whale, have become quite perturbed over Washington and the cherry tree. The Gilbert Stuart portrait of the man whose false teeth did not fit him has caused many writers to rush to undignified extremes to prove that Washington was this, that, and the other—particularly, the other. So, disregarding its positive merits, Shelby Little's book deserves consideration for avoiding the current frenzy.

It is, however, noteworthy for other reasons. In a comparatively short book, less than five hundred pages, the author has reviewed all of Washington's life and the muddled condition of the country at that period. For the most part original letters and documents are used, but are woven in so adroitly that the book does not slump under their weight. Washington stands out vividly as a man who saw clearly what had to be done. His determination and vanity kept him from being swayed by all the cross-currents around him. Such a personality was inevitably deified in the nineteenth century and underrated by this helter-skelter generation. But those who are able to detect character without a psychoanalyst's report will find this new book in the best tradition of historical biography.

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING *by Louise Schutz Boas* (LONGMANS, GREEN. $3.50)

MRS. BOAS has wisely left Elizabeth Barrett Browning's poetry for a more critical pen and a time when there may be a more sym-

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pathetic interest in it. Very simply, as one would talk of a great and charming friend, she tells the story of the woman who was almost the Poet Laureate of England. Elizabeth Barrett was a self-conscious poet in her childhood and an undisciplined Greek scholar in her teens. In her thirties, already well known for her poetry, she was the pampered bed-ridden daughter of a tyrannical father. Then came Robert Browning.

The term "great lovers" takes on a new meaning when we read of the long courtship of these two poets. Their clandestine marriage and flight to Italy is almost an echo from the novels of the period. But, unlike fiction, the story is too genuine to be knocked down by cynicism. These two intelligent people loved each other devotedly and unselfishly.

So, in spite of the literary atmosphere created and the great names that file through it, this book is, first and foremost, a love story.

PAUL ALLEN

JOHN BROWN: THE MAKING OF A MARTYR *by Robert Penn Warren* (PAYSON & CLARKE. $5.00)

JOHN BROWN is a figure equally appealing to the whitewasher or to the vilifier: he puts an extraordinary strain on any biographer's intention to be impartial. Mr. Warren with difficulty restrains himself from a liberal application of tar and feathers, but he lets us see that he would like very much to lynch his subject. His aim has been to correct Villard's standard life of Brown, but his scholarship appears unequal to the task, for instead of arguing the case out on all the evidence and suspending judgment, if need be, in the end, he rather cleverly plays up the insinuations of a prosecutor. Aside from a dogged determination to split every infinitive, Mr. Warren writes a fairly disciplined prose, and the course of John Brown, whether he is treated as hero or villain, is always absorbing.

GORHAM B. MUNSON

MIDSTREAM: THE STORY OF MY LATER LIFE *by Helen Keller* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $3.00)

THIS VOLUME continues and, in Helen Keller's own definition, completes the memoirs which were begun twenty-five years ago with *The Story of My Life*. It presents a chronicle of an almost miraculously full and useful career, crowded with events and impressions, with pleasure and work. Almost anyone, however fortunately endowed, might be justifiably proud of the achievements with which Miss Keller can credit herself. Of these achievements her literary work is perhaps the least part. She has spent a lifetime of invaluable effort in the service of The American Foundation for the Blind—securing publicity and financial aid, advocating the standardization of raised types, opposing institutionalization, working for legislation against the common and preventable causes of blindness —endeavoring, in fact, to mitigate the lot of the blind in every possible fashion.

Midstream contains a mine of impression and reminiscence. There are anecdotes of Miss Keller's remarkable friendships—her close associations with Mark Twain, with Alexander Graham Bell, with Edison, Ford, Burbank, Charlie Chaplin, William Allan Neilson, and, to her own way of thinking most important of all, with Anne Mansfield Sullivan, the teacher who made the rest possible. Helen Keller's life has been remarkably active: she has lectured, travelled, appeared in vaudeville and in the moving pictures, gone on camping trips, ridden horseback and in aeroplanes, attended the theatre and listened to the radio by feeling the vibrations of a sounding-board.

She has given us so able an account of her varied experiences that it is perhaps unfair to wish for an elaboration of them. But some of her impressions, which differ widely from those of a normal person, are of the utmost psychological interest. Her concept of color, for example, is built up of analogy and asso-

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read the *Meditations* can fail to be moved by his greatness of soul, and the same is true of the writings of Epictetus and of Seneca, or of the Stoics in general. The words of Arria to Pætus in the famous epigram of Juvenal have often been quoted, *"Non dolet! Pæte"*, and they are in themselves the quintessence of Stoicism, the Stoic sage living up to his rôle. But they are not tragic, and the Stoics themselves are not tragic, and the reason lies in their doctrine, in their outlook on the world, and in their lack of an ethical dualism.

For to the Stoic the world is one, its origin and its end being in fire. Through it there runs a finer essence (according to one school of thought, at least), a more subtle fire, as it were, the *logos* of the Stoic doctrine, which each man possesses, and which in each man, as a principle of individuation, is called the *Hegemonikon*. Here indeed is a basis of dualism, but one which is not carried out to any conclusion by the Stoics. The stress is on the oneness of man with Nature, not on his superiority to Nature. "Be like the world," says the Stoic, "the world does not cry out", and it is because they adopted this equation of man with the universe, in spite of the strength they showed in carrying it out, that thereby they divest man of dignity and there is no Stoic conception of tragedy. The identification of the world-fire in its finest form with man's *nous*, or reason, is not enough to raise him above the world—he is still the same sort of thing. Thus the Stoics are "rational" naturalists, and their own personal dignity does not save them from a lowered status. An animal can die like a Stoic, like the famous wolf of De Vigny (a Neo-Stoic) in *La Mort du Loup*. Nothing, perhaps, is in greater contrast to the Stoic naturalism than the well-known *Pensée* of Pascal—who actually represented the religious plane in a humanistic age—on the subject of man's dignity in face of the world of Nature which crushes him. *"Mais quand l'univers l'écraserait l'homme serait encore plus noble que ce qui le tue, parce qu'il sait qu'il meurt. Et l'avantage que l'univers a sur lui, l'univers n'en sait rien."* This is extreme dualism, but it illustrates the point at issue.

The eighteenth century, which has also been characterized above as a non-tragic age, is also naturalistic, or rather it is a transition period from a humanistic age, the seventeenth century, to the naturalistic nineteenth century. It is crossed by various currents of thought, amongst which the Neo-Stoic philosophy, which had reappeared at the Renaissance, is very prominent, and appears, moreover, in thinkers such as Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and Herder, tinged with a sentimental optimistic view of Nature unknown to the older Stoics. No other Stoic of the age—not even Shaftesbury, who comes nearest to them—is as convincing as Epictetus or Marcus Aurelius, for when these said Nature was good they meant that it was good to be endured, and they endured it, whereas the Neo-Stoics were largely theoretical in their views. More than the Neo-Stoics, however, the naturalists of the emotional and instinctive types were to become frequent as the century advanced. Diderot, Rousseau, and Herder are names which occur to the mind among many others. To such as these man and Nature were brought together in the idea of the natural man, overflowing with spontaneous goodness, a conception in which Biblical ideas of the Garden of Eden were intermingled with naïve tales of the wild folk of North America. Diderot himself, followed by Lessing, devised the "bourgeois" tragedy in which the Neo-classic confusion of "nobleness" of man with the *noblesse* aristocracy of the period was attacked in the name of democracy. Unfortunately the "bourgeois" was not really noble in the human sense of nobility, for this implies a certain grandeur of soul expressed in self-control, and the experiment cannot really be said to have succeeded. It is not that a bourgeois, or even a peasant, cannot be "noble". He can, but he must do it by raising himself above Nature, by achieving standards of values in himself

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of man and his supremacy over the realm of Nature, the latter being regarded, either implicitly or explicitly, as something inferior in essence to himself. Implicitly this is true with the Greeks, to whom, although they were less subjective than moderns in general, Nature was never an end in itself. There are no pure descriptions of sunrises in Greek literature, and in painting—vase painting, for example—the sun is represented by Phaëthon driving his chariot. Similarly, in literature, some of the finest descriptions of Nature poetry ever written are to be found in the *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus, but they are none the less a background to the human agony of the hero. It is the man who matters; he alone can achieve the ideal, and, if need be, face the fortune of the world. This dualism runs through every tragic age, and is not less evident, if in a different mode, in the tragic drama of Shakespeare, and in Racine. The moderns are aware of natural beauty—far more aware of it in the objective sense than were the Greeks; but even to them, in so far as they can feel tragically, it is in man that they feel it, and not in Nature.

It is, however, precisely through the medium of this dualism that tragedy can arise, because it somehow follows from the belief that man has a certain dignity, and even grandeur, that the sight of a man collapsing in evil circumstances is the most marvellous spectacle in the world, and the portrayal of it as early as Aristotle came to be designated as the highest form of poetry. It is because the dualism which invests man with this dignity is either lacking, or not emphasized, that the periods termed non-tragic above were non-tragic, and in the first case they were either naturalistic or, as in the second, definitely well on the way to naturalism. Naturalism is, under one aspect, a negative plane of life in the sense that man has ceased to do something; it may take on various aspects, and the form of it may not be the same. What man has ceased to do is to differentiate between himself and Nature. What he has begun to do is to equate himself with Nature, or, conversely, Nature with him. In either case his opinion of himself has gone down, and, although the material conditions on which tragedy is based may not have changed, the tragic conception of life has become impossible.

It has been pointed out in a recent work on the Epic that in the Homeric epic of the *Iliad* the men who fight are in reality poor, little, under-sized weaklings, often in retreat from each other, and feeble in their slaughtering capacities as compared, shall we say, with a Viking or any Northern warrior. But, in spite of this, there is no poem in the world so exhilarating to read as the *Tale of Troy*, and no poem in which human dignity is so high. And the reason of this is the human grandeur of the puny fighters, their belief in themselves alone, and, above all, their ethical sense of values, of what is right and what is wrong, of what is human and what inhuman. Achilles sulks like a child in his tent because of a quarrel about a slave-girl, but when he issues forth he issues forth like a god. Swift-footed he pursues Hector, who, for the moment cowed, flees before him. At last he has caught him. Then he goes too far "beyond the mark", the inner "mark" of the Greeks. He drags his beaten foe round the walls of Troy, having told him he will do it even before he does it. But there is also a doom for him, and Hector knows it. This is the Greek humanity, or, better, the Homeric, and because of it there is a deep sense of tragedy in Homer. Men are noble creatures and they must behave as noble creatures. It is because they have standards of value, in which they firmly believe, that they are so noble, and because they are noble in this sense they are tragic when they meet their ruin.

Now let us consider Marcus Aurelius the Stoic and the age he lived in to see if it contains a similar grandeur. About his own personal nobility of character, of course, there can be no possible doubt. No one who has

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ism of human nature of the sort which Plato recognizes in the *Phædrus* and which Aristotle also recognized in the *Politics* ("Most men are bad"). Finally, on the religious plane of life man looks upward to a power beyond himself, and experiences within himself a feeling which was once known as *humilitas*. The dualism is considerably more pronounced on the religious plane than on the human, and the evil of the flesh may be so much emphasized that the ascetic level is reached, but in both cases, human and religious, there is dualism. On the naturalistic plane however, on the contrary, man recognizes no check whatsoever, but regards his native instincts as good, which road, says Professor Babbitt, is the road to ruin. But before passing on to the subject under discussion it may be well to notice that in the dualistic systems "decorum" on the humanistic level corresponds to "humility" on the religious level, from the subjective point of view. Is there, then, a Greek equivalent to the religious objective control found in the idea of God? Actually there is, and it is found in the concept of Nemesis. The two planes are not, in fact, as different as they seem. The emphasis is merely placed differently on the religious level and on the human level, and it is probable that the finest type of human life is the religious ideal tempered by a touch of the human.

Leaving the problem of the three planes at this point, and turning to the subject of tragedy, it will be admitted on all sides that during the history of mankind there have been ages which seem more apt to be treated tragically than others, some in which actually a tragic conception of life has flourished, and others also when it has seemed to be absent. The age of the Greek tragic writers, the age of Shakespeare, the age of Racine, at once occur to the mind as tragic ages, while the last centuries of the Roman Empire, the Middle Ages generally, the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, seem equally, as it were, non-tragic. Non-tragic, too, appear certain epochs such as the Italian Renaissance, which is nevertheless very near in time to the age of Shakespeare, and presumably in some respects was not unlike it, while at the same time we know that as regards the catastrophes which are usually associated with tragic periods the non-tragic periods which have been suggested above were by no means wanting. What is it, then, which renders the Italian Renaissance a non-tragic period compared with the age of Shakespeare, and the century of Marcus Aurelius—far from being peaceful if one recalls the wars of the Marcomanni—non-tragic when compared with that of Pericles?

To such a question many answers might be given and have been given, but the answer which includes them all, and which to that extent simplifies the problem, is that the "tragic" ages were, above all, ages in which life was lived on a humanistic level; and, with a certain qualification which will be explained later, the non-tragic ages were ages in which life was lived either on an extremely religious level, or, what is still more true of our theory, on a naturalistic level. As an example of a humanistic age the age of Shakespeare and the age of Pericles are both appropriate; and as an example of a religious age the Middle Ages will be generally accepted. But the age of Marcus Aurelius, of the Italian Renaissance, and of the eighteenth century? Where do these come, and onto what plane are they to be placed? The solution to this problem lies in the relation between and the transition from one to the other of the humanistic and the naturalistic conception of life. In the widest sense of the word all the three epochs mentioned can quite accurately be classified as naturalistic ages, and it is because they are naturalistic ages that, in spite of the efforts of their writers, they failed to supply tragedy and a tragic outlook on life.

For closely bound up with the humanistic outlook on life is the inward conviction, strongly felt if not expressed, of the dignity

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THE ROOTS OF TRAGEDY

by F. McEachran

IN THE COURSE of a brilliant attack on Romanticism in his book *Rousseau and Romanticism* Professor Babbitt makes use on several occasions of the suggestion that man can live, from the ethical point of view, on three different planes or levels—the religious, the human, and the naturalistic. It is the aim of this study to show how fruitful this conception may be when applied to the problem of tragedy, and to put forward a suggestion, not made by Professor Babbitt but implicit in his doctrine, that tragedy, or rather the tragic outlook on life, is only possible on the human level. Before attempting to demonstrate this—and it is not so obvious as perhaps some people may imagine—a few explanatory remarks on the meaning of the word "human" will be necessary in the sense in which it will be used in this essay.

As a convinced dualist Professor Babbitt believes that the stability of human society and the fruits of human civilization have always depended, and always will depend, on a certain control which men can exercise by means of the will over the natural animal instincts, and that the dignity and discipline of human life are the result of this control by the will—that voluntary control is, in fact, the supreme act of humanity. On this principle of control or discipline, which has been stated here somewhat briefly, the three levels or planes of life depend, and according to whether the principle of control is placed above man on a religious basis, or within man on a humanistic basis, or is dropped altogether, and natural instinct put in its place, so men live on a religious, or human, or naturalistic plane. To illustrate what he means by the control Professor Babbitt refers to the Greeks with their doctrine of inner harmony, expressed in the phrase μηδὲν ἄγαν or the Roman "decorum", both of which conceptions were ideals attainable by the action of the will, and which the ancients put before themselves in order to attain the proper living of life. These were "human" ideals, because they required no superhuman power to make them effective, and were attained simply by a recognition that men have something in them which, if not held in check, can be harmful to other men, a dual-

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

COMPILED BY FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE, LIFE MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, IN COÖPERATION WITH THE PUBLIC LIBRARIES OF AMERICA

With six new titles appearing in this month's score it may safely be asserted that Spring, if not actually here, is close at hand. It may be difficult at first glance to assign a reason for the sudden popularity of some of the new books here listed, but some of them are in the inevitable class. Mrs. Wharton's novels always "make" the score. *Marriage and Morals* touches, in its title at least, the topic concerning which the readers of today seem to have the liveliest curiosity. And the irrepressible Richard Halliburton is merely repeating his previous triumph; one of his books, *The Royal Road to Romance*, holds a record for continuous appearance in these lists which has been exceeded only by the late Edward Bok's *Americanization* and Mr. Wells's famous "Outline". —F. P. S.

NOVELS

1. ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT	*Erich Maria Remarque*	LITTLE, BROWN
2. WHITEOAKS OF JALNA	*Mazo de la Roche*	LITTLE, BROWN
3. ROPER'S ROW	*Warwick Deeping*	KNOPF
4. A FAREWELL TO ARMS	*Ernest Hemingway*	SCRIBNER'S
5. THEY STOOPED TO FOLLY	*Ellen Glasgow*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
6. HUDSON RIVER BRACKETED *	*Edith Wharton*	APPLETON
7. THE GALAXY	*Susan Ertz*	APPLETON
8. HANS FROST	*Hugh Walpole*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
9. RED SILENCE	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY, DORAN
10. BURNING BEAUTY	*Temple Bailey*	PENN
11. SCARLET SISTER MARY	*Julia Peterkin*	BOBBS-MERRILL
12. ULTIMA THULE *	*Henry Handel Richardson*	NORTON

GENERAL

1. HENRY THE EIGHTH	*Francis Hackett*	LIVERIGHT
2. THE ART OF THINKING	*Ernest Dimnet*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
3. THE TRAGIC ERA	*Claude G. Bowers*	HOUGHTON MIFFLIN
4. A PREFACE TO MORALS	*Walter Lippmann*	MACMILLAN
5. NEW WORLDS TO CONQUER *	*Richard Halliburton*	BOBBS-MERRILL
6. STRANGE INTERLUDE	*Eugene O'Neill*	LIVERIGHT
7. JOURNEY'S END	*R. C. Sherriff*	BRENTANO
8. THE MANSIONS OF PHILOSOPHY	*Will Durant*	SIMON & SCHUSTER
9. ELIZABETH AND ESSEX	*Lytton Strachey*	HARCOURT, BRACE
10. MARRIAGE AND MORALS *	*Bertrand Russell*	LIVERIGHT
11. JULY '14 *	*Emil Ludwig*	PUTNAM
12. MRS. EDDY *	*Edward Franden Dakin*	SCRIBNER'S

* *This title has not previously appeared in the Monthly Score.*

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aid afforded by France, are consequently the topics which this book discusses with more detail than is given to the retreat across New Jersey or the campaign of Burgoyne. Military operations are subordinated to their background, and the result is a distinct contribution to the history of our national origins.

FOSTER RHEA DULLES

THE GOURMETS' ALMANAC *by Allan Ross Macdougall* (COVICI-FRIEDE. $4.00)

MR. MACDOUGALL'S book is as satisfying as the pot-au-feu he praises so fervently. In the disguise of an almanac, we have a host of unusual recipes that would allure even a dyspeptic. All the familiar foods, including rice, undergo a succulent metamorphosis into something rich and strange. The main dishes of several nations are given, with full directions for preparation and eating. Some of the recipes have been culled from old books. Others Mr. Macdougall has collected in France. And some of the best are the author's own concoctions. The fortunate part of it all is that most of them do not demand any ingredient that the corner store cannot furnish, legally or surreptitiously.

It would be misleading, however, to praise this merely as a kitchen volume. It is most emphatically a book to read, for Mr. Macdougall writes with gusto and wit. Interspersed in the text and at the end are bits of relevant prose and verse that make the book a miniature anthology on eating and drinking. It can be recommended as a book for enthusiastic reading and cautious experiment.

IN COLDEST AFRICA *by Carveth Wells* (DOUBLEDAY, DORAN. $2.50)

CARVETH WELLS, whose splendid book on the Malay jungle is still popular, has been told that he has "the faculty of making the truth sound like a lie". In his book about his expedition on the Mountains of the Moon in equatorial Africa, he has certainly made the most of that faculty. But his most astounding statements are always authenticated.

In the foothills he found a beautiful countryside with an almost perfect climate. He stayed at hotels with all the conveniences and jazz bands. On the actual mountain climbs, however, there was danger and discomfort even though it was not what one associates with Africa. There the whole party had a dramatic bout with starvation and zero weather.

Much that Mr. Wells has to tell about the natives and the animals is new and all of it is interesting. He has a nice sense of the unusual and the humorous.

PAUL ALLEN

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Francis Meynell is a real modernist, i.e., one who produces a purely contemporary expression out of his acknowledgment of traditional art. He fails, indeed, to define the position of the typographer in advertising with finality, but he lays down the precepts of good typography and layout in a most engaging manner.

There is such parallelism in the books that they invite the notoriously odious comparison. Both contain specimen pages of new types, but the Meynell book excels in this feature with a wider and fresher assortment and a larger range of sizes. Both books are made by well known typographers—presumed to be book designers, but again the Meynell book surpasses in every point of construction. Finally, the Meynell book contains a table for the calculation of letter composition. The problem of how many type letters of a given face can be fitted into a given space is one that confronts the advertising typographer daily. Here, then, is the invaluable short-cut to this calculation—the product of no small amount of labor.

Despite their slight insufficiencies from the point of view of what one might be led to expect from their titles and announcements, these two are valuable books for the student of advertising and typography. Neither contains the full answer to all the scholar's questions, but each contributes something to his better understanding.

PAUL JOHNSTON

THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE *by Claude H. Van Tyne* (HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN. $5.00)

EVERYONE who has read Professor Van Tyne's previous works dealing with the Revolution will expect in this first volume on the War of Independence, which has been subtitled the "American Phase", a readable and graphic account of the war which would be based upon the soundest historical scholarship. Nor will they in any way be disappointed. Professor Van Tyne has a lively style occasionally touched with irony, and enriches his book with an incredible wealth of quotations from contemporary documents of all kinds. He knows his field so thoroughly that his candid and impartial interpretation of the events of 1775 and 1776 is of the greatest interest.

It is an amazing story he has to tell of the division of interests in America as the colonies faced open war with Great Britain—of their unpreparedness, of the low morale of under-nourished, unclothed, unequipped troops who wanted nothing so much as to go home, and did so in great numbers. It becomes more and more difficult to understand how they could ever have won independence until Professor Van Tyne shows us the other half of the picture—the division of opinion in England, the corruption in army and navy circles, the sinking morale of the British troops, and the incapacity of many of their leaders. The War of Independence during these first two years seems to unfold under Professor Van Tyne's touch as a conflict between two incapable, largely disorganized forces which were so handicapped by mismanagement, corruption and political interference that if it had not been for the tremendous issues at stake history would gladly dismiss it all as a tragedy of comic errors.

This is not to say that we are not also shown the growing spirit of patriotism among the colonies, nor told of the heroism of those troops who remained in the ranks, but no realistic picture of the situation with which Washington had to contend can avoid emphasizing the forces of disunion rather than those of union. Professor Van Tyne's history would not prove popular in Chicago, but it is history which has in itself the proof of its accuracy.

The political situation in America and England, conditions in the field, the development of public opinion which made possible the Declaration of Independence, the secret

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really all we have to give the world". Even those who do not like the way Miss Newman applied her theory must admit that the theory itself is sound.

T. S. MATTHEWS

THE WOMEN OF CAIRO: SCENES OF LIFE IN THE ORIENT *by Gérard de Nerval* (HARCOURT, BRACE. TWO VOLS. $7.50)

IN THE year 1843, Gérard de Nerval left Marseilles for Cairo, travelling thence by way of Syria to Constantinople, and *Voyages en Orient*, his account of that journey, is here translated. This book is chiefly distinguished in its beginning and its ending. Cairo and Constantinople of 1843—there is little trace of them now, and as little knowledge! Here one may learn something of what they were: the street life and the café life, the theatre, the manners, a little even of the profound and secret mind of this vanished East. But, for the most part, Nerval gives to his picture of both these cities something of the unreal solidity of an Edwardian villa or an expensive birthday cake, for his circumstances were always one degree removed from reality because his interest was not so much in them as in the gesture with which he should salute them. And the women of Cairo—Turkish, Egyptian, Coptic, Mussulman or Christian, bond or free—were no more than a background before which he hoped to find himself in an effective pose. The pursuit of this pose led him into strange adventures: into a half-hearted attempt at marriage, into Eastern dress, into the purchase of a female slave and the consequent discovery that not only his own but all the harems were more modest, more circumspect, than even Balmoral under the good queen. The humor with which he tells this story is interrupted with moments of purely tragic observation, an explanation in some sort both of his character and of his failure as an artist.

". . . a Mussulman in Egypt, a pantheist among the Druses, and a devotee of the star-gods of Chaldea when I was on the sea . . ." —there is a singular fascination in Gérard de Nerval's pursuit of Gérard de Nerval. But Syria suffers from it. For, in the lunar spaces of his mind, the shadow was larger, more solid, than the body, so that the places he visited—Beyrout, Lebanon, Acre, Baalbek—are, in spite of the detail he gives them, like a series of picture postcards seen through the wrong end of a telescope. *Cujus regio, ejus religio*: this is the inner story of his journey. He was confused with dreams; he hoped to find somewhere, in a religion, a myth, a legend, that "the impossible has realized itself". And the unquiet and scattered fascination of this book lies, not in the Eastern world of 1843, but in the fool's paradise of a mind preoccupied with its own disorder.

GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MODERN TYPOGRAPHY & LAYOUT *by Douglas C. McMurtrie* (EYNCOURT PRESS. $7.50)

THE TYPOGRAPHY OF NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS *by Francis Meynell* (STOKES. $12.50)

DOUGLAS C. MCMURTRIE has set out to be the first to expound upon modernism in typography and design. But his difficulty is that though he verbally deplores the superficially modernistic in technique he reproduces examples of German and French advertisements and pages which, if they are to be considered as a source of inspiration for American work, can only lead to shallow pretentiousness. "Modernism", if it be the lavish use of sans-serif letters in striking arrangements and the abolition of capital letters and punctuation marks, is destined to go the way of all fads, leaving as much of a mark on our time as fads usually leave. There *is* a modern art in advertising, but it is deeper than the arrangement of type and layout. It is the force that has drawn so much of creative effort to the purpose of selling.

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Warner possesses a sharp eye for characterization and description, and exhibits a deep unalloyed love of life. The result is a book that convinces the reader of its authenticity from the first page to the last. There is nothing overdrawn or overreached here. Life in the forecastle of a tramp steamer with its variegated sailor types, an itinerant existence with the Salvation Army in Australia, milking cows in New Zealand, sailing the Tasman sea in a windjammer, working around the Horn and through the tropics in a stokehole, these are the experiences that Mr. Warner sets down. He sets them down with gusto, too, and it is to be suspected that a sort of nostalgia comes over him now when he reverts to the wilful wandering of his youth. *A Landlubber's Log* is really an account of the actual realization of the dream of wandering that obsesses every adventurous youth who has heard of the sea. That, perhaps, is why it is so pleasing to read.

HERBERT GORMAN

FRANCES NEWMAN'S LETTERS *edited by Hansell Baugh, with a preface by James Branch Cabell* (LIVERIGHT. $3.00)

A YEAR and a half ago Frances Newman died, leaving two published novels (*The Hard-Boiled Virgin, Dead Lovers Are Faithful Lovers*), a book on *The Short Story's Mutations*, numerous uncollected critical articles, and a few stories. After her death appeared her translation of Jules Laforgue. Now her friend Hansell Baugh has edited a collection of her letters, dating from 1914 to the month of her death (October, 1928).

If the reader is not interested in literary gossip and thinks poorly of Maestro Cabell, then he will find little to please him in this book. The carefully suave shade of Cabell lies dankly on these pages. (Even the editor has caught cold from it, and speaks from time to time with a slight snuffle.) The friendship between these two—an extremely literary, delicately adjusted, master-and-growing-disciple friendship—is the main plot of this epistolary narrative. When Miss Newman was a librarian in Atlanta, writing Literary Introductions for the Carnegie Library Notes, her printed opinions about himself came to Cabell's favorable attention: a correspondence ensued, and several meetings. We are left with the feeling that it was the correspondence, more than the meetings, that really mattered. Then Miss Newman began to write in earnest, and on her own account. Her *The Hard-Boiled Virgin* won Cabell's unstinted praise (except for the title); but when she started work on her second book, a slight, almost imperceptible note of discord can be heard in their exchanges. She never takes issue with him; but in her silences now an alert ear seems to detect a growing stubbornness, a consciousness that she cannot much longer stomach being disciple to anyone living.

Miss Newman annoyed a good many people by the intolerance and what some called the pedantry of her literary criticism. Writing once on this subject to John Farrar, she gave a fairly lengthy and respectable list of her contemporaries whom she had praised in print; then went on to say: "I don't like dull, solemn, pompous writers like Hardy and Dreiser and O'Neill and Willa Cather, or thin, dull writers like Bromfield . . . I read every word Ring Lardner writes . . . I don't like writers who don't know the meaning of all the words they use, and who don't know how to put them together. Which is why I don't like Carl Van Vechten and Scott Fitzgerald". Some might think her instances ill-chosen; few could cavil at her reasons. And her theory of writing: "My only theories are that a writer must choose people and places he knows all about, that he must be painfully careful about choosing his point of view and sticking to it, that he must be sure every phase in it is his own, and that he must go down deeply into himself—to the point where he becomes different from every other human being . . . our own emotions are

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Dumas played an honorable rôle, this latter section has nothing to do with the voyage of the *Emma* or with Dumas himself, for the novelist arrived in Palermo after the fall of the city, and took no personal part in the conquest of the island. Yet his account of Garibaldi's expedition is so extraordinarily vivid that it often reads like the best parts of his novels. Of course Dumas, in common with Hugo and the rest of the romantic school, was always looking for the dramatic and picturesque, yet the apparently crack-brained invasion of Garibaldi and his Red-Shirts was in itself so dramatic and picturesque that it is probable Dumas had only to stick to the bare facts. Dumas's friendship with Garibaldi certainly opened to him the events of the expedition, and there is no reason to believe that what he gives in this book is in any way a departure from the truth. It is certain then that the last part of the volume is at once a valuable historical source-book and a fascinating story of adventure.

To the average reader, however, it is the first part—Dumas's story of the genesis of his voyage, his troubles in getting started, and the character sketches of his companions—which is of keenest interest. In the change from the *Monte-Cristo*, which Dumas had built in Greece especially for the voyage, to the Liverpool-built *Emma* the novelist tells an hilarious tale of his own inefficiency, and tells it with a delightful gusto. Dumas was one of the greatest geniuses of his time, but as a business man he was truly a babe in arms. The best of it was he was fully conscious of it. Dumas was that rarest of figures in literature, a great novelist who could laugh at himself. In this he was almost alone among the French romanticists, and indeed his humorous self-exposure was in itself utterly un-French. It was in his type of humor that Dumas proved his negro blood—in this and in his complete disregard for efficiency and the main chance. And then the eleven passengers—six men, two dogs, a canary and a "midshipman"—the latter a beautiful girl who was enamoured of Dumas! The men were a photographer, a dramatist, a young man of pleasure, a doctor without a practice and two servants straight out of one of Dumas's own romances. As for cargo there were hogsheads of wine, champagne by the thousand bottles, Bengal lights, and Catherine-wheels. "I belong to that class of imbeciles which does not know how to refuse," writes Dumas. To his expedition and his friends he truly refused nothing, this Gargantuan man, part child, all genius, naïve, natural, delightful, who hated cruelty and jealousy and avarice. Alexandre Dumas was surely no saint where the weaknesses of the flesh were concerned, but his heart was bigger and his acts kinder than those of many who have been honored as the spiritually elect. Mr. R. S. Garnett, who writes the introduction and has made the translation, is to be congratulated on giving to the English-speaking public this new revelation of the soul of D'Artagnan - Athos - Porthos - Aramis whose name on earth was Alexandre Dumas.

GRENVILLE VERNON

A LANDLUBBER'S LOG *by Arthur Warner* (LITTLE, BROWN. $3.00)

THIS is a purely personal narrative without any frills. The reader noticing the subtitle, "Around the World as Sailor and Tramp", will be disappointed if he expects to find anecdotes of fierce fights with head-hunters, murderous activities in the jungle, strange discoveries, and all the other "color" that goes to make up the usual travel-book of adventure. What he will find is a simply told but always dramatic story of a youth who desired the sea so strongly that he embarked on a tramp steamer and went all the way from New York to Australia and New Zealand in it, tramped about New Zealand and labored at various jobs and finally, by various stages, worked his way westward to New York again, thus circling the globe. Although it is simply told it is always vivid for Mr.

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that Mrs. Morton wrote the first American novel; and there is an omission of American magazines in foreign languages, although one German periodical was issued in Germantown as early as 1764. Such objections would be purely pedantic were it not that the very thoroughness of the book invites a desire that it should be flaw-proof. It must be read by anyone devoted to American studies and will be read by many more who are eager to pursue the records of our developing culture.

GRANT C. KNIGHT

EARLY LETTERS OF MARK HOPKINS (JOHN DAY. $4.00).

OLD LETTERS have a double value. They reveal the character of their writers and, often of greater importance, they throw light upon the manners and customs of their times. There is little in the newly-found letters of the famous President of Williams College which reveals much more than has been disclosed in previous volumes of his letters of the character of the man whose fame as a teacher is embalmed in James A. Garfield's epigrammatic tribute to the effect that the ideal college was a boy on one end of a log and Mark Hopkins on the other. The many-sidedness implicit in that phrase again crops out in the correspondence between Mark and his brothers, his mother and other relatives. He was interested in everything; his unhappy brother Harry's experiments with a steam-engine, which seems to have embodied the essential principle of the modern steam turbine, the folkways of the Virginia gentry, the properties of the newly-discovered electro-magnet.

Mark Hopkins was born in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, in 1802 and became President of Williams in his thirty-fourth year. These letters include many exchanged between members of his family long before his birth; the collection covers the period from 1770 to 1857. Through this correspondence one gets glimpses of the life of cultured Americans in the formative years of our national development. It was a simple enough life, at its best. As a people we were still pioneers. Here are letters from the "Connecticut Western Reserve", that stretch of Ohio along the shore of Lake Erie into which New Englanders were flocking to take up the cheap land and found the city which they had not yet decided to call Cleveland. Mark Hopkins went to Mecklenburg, Virginia, to teach a "select school" for the children of the planters, and wrote pithy comments on the habits, manners and food of the Virginians, still crudely primitive by comparison with even the simple standards of Stockbridge. Here are letters from Harry Hopkins to his brother, describing the pleasant quarters he had found to live in on the Bowery in New York. And the later letters of Mark Hopkins himself, written from Williamstown, throw a searchlight upon educational standards, methods and limitations in the first half of the nineteenth century.

No name is attached to these letters as that of editor or compiler. They carry their own internal evidence of their authenticity, however, and make a valuable addition to the list of source-books in American history.

FRANK PARKER STOCKBRIDGE

ON BOARD THE EMMA *by Alexandre Dumas* (APPLETON. $5.00)

DESPITE the enormous output of the author of *The Three Musketeers* and the fact that not a little of this output was the concoction of writers working under the direction of Dumas, the appearance of an unpublished Dumas work is an event of no ordinary interest. This is particularly true when that work bears every evidence of having been written by Dumas himself. *On Board the Emma* is the story of the novelist's travels in the Mediterranean on his yacht, the latter part of the book being devoted to an account of Garibaldi's Sicilian expedition, ending with the capture of Naples. With the exception of the Naples expedition, in which

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A VARIED SHELF

GOOD-BYE TO ALL THAT *by Robert Graves* (CAPE & SMITH. $3.00)

ROBERT GRAVES'S *Good-bye to All That* differs from most of the war books in that (1) it is not written in the form of a novel and (2) it does not strive for effect. It achieves it, however. Mr. Graves writes of violent deaths, decaying corpses and army prostitutes neither melodramatically nor with an affectation of matter-of-factness. He shows his own reactions, perhaps slightly dulled by the intervening years. The reader shares the author's inoculation to war; at the end of the war he, too, is less affected by the horrible things he sees. Mr. Graves, however, does not concentrate on any particular phase of the conflict; he portrays whatever came his way. Consequently much of the book is technical or historical information concerning certain British regiments that is not of much interest to the reader. Much of it is personal anecdote about the author's friends, Siegfried Sassoon in particular. It reveals Mr. Graves as a trifle anxious to draw in well known names without sufficient justification. The anecdote about Lytton Strachey, however, cannot be referred to as supporting this theory; it more than compensates for several footless references to John Galsworthy and Arnold Bennett. A military tribunal was examining Strachey, a conscientious objector. "Tell me, Mr. Strachey," said the chairman, trying to appeal to his better nature, "what would you do if you saw a German soldier trying to violate your sister?" Strachey replied, in his curious falsetto voice: "I would try to get between them".

Despite its lighter interludes, *Good-bye to All That* is essentially a serious and despairing book. Mr. Graves may not hold your attention throughout as well as Remarque and the others, but the final impression of hopelessness is stronger.

GEOFFREY T. HELLMAN

A HISTORY OF AMERICAN MAGAZINES 1741-1850 *by Frank Luther Mott* (APPLETON. $10.00)

THE CONTEMPORARY headlong interest in things American made it inevitable that someone should write an authoritative history of our magazines, one that might take its place on our shelves beside other standard works on divisions of our national literature. This has been done by the director of the School of Journalism of the University of Iowa. Giving some ten years to a diligent collecting of facts, Professor Mott was confronted, when it came to organization of his material, with an awkward question: Should he relate his data in straightforward narrative fashion or should he present them in a series of postponed discussions dealing with particular aspects of the separate periods of magazine production? He chose the latter course, thereby confusing all but the most careful reader, yet presenting an impressive array of evidence illuminating almost every conceivable phase of the material and intellectual problems that converged upon editors of the past, and all of it lightened by a humor that relieves precision and comes properly to a climax in the chapter on *Godey's Lady's Book*. Perhaps it would have been well had the charts contained the names of editors and publishers; perhaps a fuller discussion of the Gothic tale would have been justified. There is a mistake of one hundred years in a date on page 103; there is the debatable statement

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failed therefore to work toward a common aim: we have in fact speakers on experiment who seem out of sympathy with the experimental and speakers on tradition who are all for a rupture with tradition. Under the circumstances each made his own interpretation of his assignment, and this fact makes it hard to draw any general conclusions from what might have been a very profitable debate or a parallel exploration in a common spirit of the general theme of Tradition and Experiment. So one can only comment in a random way on the random individual contributions.

It happens that the best two addresses, "Tradition in Poetry" by Edmund Blunden and "Experiment in Criticism" by T. S. Eliot, have already gone to the jury: I mean in this case that THE BOOKMAN has already presented them to its readers. The two worst were by ladies. Edith Sitwell is trivial on the subject of "Experiment in Poetry." Therefore let her be attacked on a trifle. She flies into a rage at a long defunct magazine, *Secession*, and asks her audience to hate "a specimen of their verse. I am not exaggerating", she says. "I copied it out for you". But the version she gives has had its original's title altered, the wording has been changed, the line length increased, the ribald point omitted, and the structure altered from a dialogue to a monologue! Rebecca West, like Miss Sitwell, is very free with the statement of her likes and dislikes but fails to make them seem important. Let us pass by her address on "Tradition in Criticism" as quickly as she dismisses Plato, Aristotle, Samuel Johnson and Matthew Arnold, all of whom it seems are not of much importance to an up-to-date convert to the cult of Freud. The other six lectures are competent and pedestrian. Many interesting points are raised by the way, but there are no remarkable flashes of insight, and the discussion as a whole is not orchestrated.

GORHAM B. MUNSON

SCANDINAVIAN LITERATURE *by H. G. Topsöe-Jensen* (NORTON. $3.50)

IN THIS book, the full title of which is *Scandinavian Literature: From Brandes to Our Day*, Mr. H. G. Topsöe-Jensen has fulfilled a need; for whereas until now we have never been able to appreciate fully (unless we were specialists) the background of such well known writers as Hans Andersen, Brandes, Ibsen, Strindberg and Hamsun, Lagerlöf and Undset, it is now possible to get an integrated impression of the literary heredity of these people. The preoccupation with "the soil", which has interested thousands of readers, can now be seen as an inevitable growth.

Mr. Topsöe-Jensen has been wise in not stressing the works of writers already well known to us, for those can be obtained easily, but has concentrated on the work and tendencies of writers still strange.

According to the writer of this book, the term "Scandinavian Literature" can no longer be used: "The bond between the three related peoples has been loosened. The twentieth century will speak of a Danish, a Swedish and a Norwegian literature".

K. GWENDA DAVID

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bert Tree and others likewise do turns on the stage. And a "Life of Mr. Baldwin" is a tolerable parody of the "panoramic" style of Mr. Guedalla's *Palmerston*.

DOUGLAS BUSH

THE SENSE OF GLORY *by Herbert Read* (HARCOURT, BRACE. $3.00)

A CHARMING ease of manner is the first characteristic of Herbert Read's criticism that wins the reader over to pay close attention to his thought. He is a man of trained taste, an expert in discrimination among styles. His scholarship is extensive, yet accessible, without straining on his part. Furthermore, he knows the heights of the Middle Ages (the *Summa* of Aquinas, and the *Divine Comedy*), and, after that, he can negotiate the hillocks and lower ranges of literature without losing his breath. Most of all, his ease appears to arise from the breadth and limpidity of his own emotions. He appears to have no special private prejudices to bitterly defend, but has made himself a mirror-like reflector of the variety of literature. That way lies impressionism, but Mr. Read has not pored over St. Thomas Aquinas in vain: he is adept in making distinctions and he is judicial and hierarchic in an unobtrusive manner.

The second outstanding characteristic of Mr. Read is his true originality. The true originality, according to Poe, lies not in novelty of word combination or novelty of construction, but in novelty of effect upon the reader. The true originality "is that which, in bringing out the half-formed, the reluctant, or the unexpressed fancies of mankind, or in exciting the more delicate pulses of the heart's passion, or in giving birth to some universal sentiment or instinct in embryo, thus combines with the pleasurable effect of *apparent* novelty, a real egotistic delight". This kind of originality, this surprising appeal to the dormant capacities of the reader, may be called the classical originality, and it is the type Mr. Read manifests so well.

In the present collection he addresses himself to the reader's sleeping sense of glory. Mr. Read's criticism is always relevant to the present: we live, he declares, in a shallow age: "we neither love deeply enough, nor feel deeply enough, nor think deeply enough, to enjoy life's most impressive sanction". The sentiment of glory, "the radiance of virtue", are among our lost emotions. Mr. Read chronicles the variations of the sense of glory, its great moments of emergence, the great sins against it, from Froissart to Henry James.

In the essays on Froissart and Malory, Mr. Read gives a valuable exposition of Chivalry, the philosophy of the man of action in the Feudal Ages. In the essay on Descartes, he brings to bear the guns of Maritain, Whitehead and himself upon Cartesianism, which has turned out to be a sin against the sense of glory. Swift follows, also without the sense of glory which in literature is "the eloquence of ideas or sentiments. . . . Eloquence is the expression of glory: glory in words, not of words". This eloquence of ideas and sentiments Vauvenargues, treated in the following essay, had; Mr. Read proceeds to illustrate his theme through successive considerations of Sterne, Hawthorne, Bagehot and finally Henry James, where he makes one more effort to discover "the figure in the carpet", and this time it is declared to be the "ordering the gathered forces of time to a manifestation of their most enduring glory".

TRADITION AND EXPERIMENT IN PRESENT-DAY LITERATURE, *addresses by R. H. Mottram, J. D. Beresford, Edmund Blunden, Edith Sitwell, A. J. A. Symons, Osbert Burdett, Ashley Dukes, C. K. Munro, Rebecca West and T. S. Eliot.* (OXFORD. $2.50)

AN EXCELLENT idea may have been behind this series of lectures on the novel, poetry, the drama, biography and criticism given at the City Literary Institute of London, but apparently the various speakers were unaware of what the central idea might be and

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ESSAYS AND CRITICISM

THE MISSING MUSE *by Philip Guedalla* (HARPERS. $2.50)

TWENTY years ago Mr. Guedalla was Oxford's cleverest undergraduate. He still is. This volume has its phrases, good and not so good. Modern essayists "always seem to back into the limelight—just like Colonel Lawrence"; "I have always thought that Slav fiction was the perfect case for closing the Dardanelles". And something in us responds to "the thought-reader (now transferred from country fairs to Chairs of Psychology in universities)". Philip the Bold has become a respectable member of the older generation and, to be pleasantly cosmopolitan, one may say that he applies himself *con amore à la recherche du temps perdu*. He casts a half-sympathetic, half-malicious eye upon Lord Haldane, *The Yellow Book*, King Edward, B. R. Haydon, Mr. Belloc, Mr. Churchill, Lady Astor, and others, including Mr. Arlen, "*le Corelli de nos jours*". Some of these sketches are wise as well as amusing.

The opening essay pleads for a revival of history-writing as an art—it is Clio who is "missing"—in the same terms that I heard the author use in a lecture six or seven years ago. The modern historian, if able to jest at all, retires "to giggle in a footnote. But Mr. Gibbon did not disdain the elegant teehee right in the center of his page". The lively protest may still be warranted, in the field of history, but some readers would welcome the veriest Dryasdust after being flooded with biographies so artistic that they do not need to be historical.

About half of the book is devoted to the miscellaneous stock-in-trade of the essayist, and Mr. Guedalla's acidulous meditations have hardly fermented enough to produce a very heady brew; they are often very small beer indeed. The prefatory dialogue on essay-writing condemns the "studied triviality" of "Lambkins", but says nothing of studied smartness. However, it is only an established author who can afford to clean out his desk so thoroughly.

VENTILATIONS *by Hesketh Pearson* (LIPPINCOTT. $2.50)

IN THESE gossipy chapters on aspects of biography Mr. Pearson is clearly of the "hit-and-run" school, though whether as batter or motorist one is not sure, since he sometimes makes a score, sometimes leaves behind broken bones and a smell of gas. In either capacity he travels light, unembarrassed by any weight of knowledge. He frequently insists, for example, that Boswell's Johnson is almost as much of a creation as Shakespeare's Falstaff, and indulges in a quite uncritical eulogy of *Elizabeth and Essex*. Eulogy, however, is not what Mr. Pearson does best. He has no ideas to speak of, but anecdotes in plenty. On account of his avowed preferences in biographical method and his talent for inventing anecdote and dialogue (also freely avowed), one is not always able to distinguish between the authentic and the fabulous. For a safer division one might take the titles of the late Gerald Cumberland's books, *Set Down in Friendship* and *Set Down in Malice*. At any rate there is an excellent scene between Mr. Frank Harris and Mr. Galsworthy, in which the former delivers to his gentlemanly host a prospectus of his *Autobiography*, a work in the "voluptuous-nude". Shaw, Chesterton, Belloc, Asquith, Sir Her-

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new material to write a pleasant and informative volume about the pachydermatous author of *Rasselas* and his somewhat livelier satellite. The result is a book containing two major portraits that are freshly conceived and several minor snapshots that undoubtedly have their subjects accurately "fixed". While Mr. Salpeter does not delve too deeply into the complicated motivating springs of Johnson and Boswell, he does recreate them in a sufficiently vivid manner to make us see them as living men. Mr. Salpeter informs us that he has "read and reread, perused and dipped" into more than sixty volumes over a period of three years in preparation for *Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell* and we may well believe it after we have finished reading his book. There is a veracity about it that is undeniable and an evident intimacy with the Johnson period that is unquestionable. For one who has labored in biographical pastures (and stony pastures they are!) the job of assembling, collating, analyzing and shaping into a symmetrical whole the thousand and one stray facts that go to make up a man's life is recognized as formidably onerous; one cannot do less, then, than to congratulate Mr. Salpeter on his industry and the smoothness of the result.

HERBERT GORMAN

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given us the most complete and scrupulously documented account of the great Russian that appears in English. He has told us, in simple statement, nearly everything about Count Tolstoy that we could wish to know. And he has gone further—he has captured for us something of the gigantic paradox of Tolstoy's genius. He has not explained it, for that would have been impossible. But he has made it genuine and credible. We feel, with a conviction of reality, the force of Tolstoy's personality, the power and range of his mind.

We are amazed, but convinced, by the fickle young nobleman who altered the course and direction of his life every day or two, and who was yet capable of the enormous and sustained effort necessary to put *War and Peace* upon paper. We believe in the rude, arrogant, hypersensitive youth whom his associates called "the Bear", in the richly observant soldier who wrote *The Cossacks*, in the enormously lustful old ascetic who shocked Russia with *The Kreutzer Sonata*. We feel the force with which Tolstoy imposed upon the uncontrollable passions of his extraordinarily vigorous body, the fanatic curb of his equally vigorous mind. Nazaroff's biography is something more than a commendable work of scholarship, it is a product of a vitally creative imagination.

MARGARET WALLACE

ONCE THERE WAS A MAN—NAPOLEON *by Joseph Delteil* (COVICI-FRIEDE. $3.00)

THIS book by M. Delteil may be regarded either as a hymn or a biographical rhapsody. The rich and stabbing style in which it has been composed (and which has been so splendidly translated into English by Mr. Lewis Galantière) is shot through and through with connotations that transcend mere prose. There is poetical substance here and because this is so the book may bewilder the casual reader at first. But not after he has been drawn into the swiftly moving and brightly sparkling stream of its development. For Delteil, the Emperor Napoleon was a mythological creature, a titanic thirst and obsession driving ever toward its objective and stifled only by the gods. This force is pictured in what might be called seven panels, barbarically colored panels splashed with astounding hues that remind me remotely of Robert Winthrop Chanler's screens. There is the Corsican's childhood, the Italian campaign, the Egyptian venture, the birth of the Empire, the Russian disaster and the tortured death at St. Helena. In these seven panels the most imposing and titanic dream ever dared by a man is set forth in all its varying aspects. To understand the vividness of the prose a bit of the description of the burning of Moscow may be quoted. "He could see soldiers running madly between the white-hot, green-hot walls. The finger-nails of one were on fire, and he waved his hand in the air like a five-branched candelabra. Another, his shako in flames, galloped about like a torch. The bursting of a cap button and the breaking of a phial resounded like thunder. Flaming rats ran along the water-spouts like so many holy ghosts. Sparrows took flight with their wings afire". It is in this alternately flaming and explosive style that M. Delteil has written his book. A *tour de force*, perhaps, but one that arouses a thousand amazed conjectures in the reader.

DR. JOHNSON AND MR. BOSWELL *by Harry Salpeter* (COWARD-MCCANN. $3.50)

THE late Geoffrey Scott was at work on a biography of James Boswell when he died, and readers of his *Portrait of Zélide* will well understand what a loss to literature that unwritten biography is. Meanwhile there are the six published volumes of the Boswell Papers, which Mr. Scott edited, to entertain us and make us aware of what an unusual fellow the biographer of Doctor Johnson was. Mr. Harry Salpeter has taken advantage of this

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ciation. She says that pink is "like a baby's cheek or a soft southern breeze"; that "gray is like a soft shawl around the shoulders"; that "yellow is like the sun—it means life and is rich in promise". She describes as one of her keenest esthetic sensations the feeling produced by placing her hand on a tree-trunk when a gentle rain was rustling the leaves. We could wish for another volume of such suggestive first-hand impressions as this one.

STENDHAL *by Rudolf Kayser* (HOLT. $3.00)

HENRI BEYLE, the son of a Grenoble lawyer, is surely one of the strangest figures who ever held an indisputable claim to the title of literary greatness. He was an ambitious but fumbling adventurer, a moderately good soldier, a very inadequate business man and a mediocre diplomat. He was not particularly successful at anything, and he had something of a talent for getting himself into trouble. Apart from this last quality, his life is relatively dull. He was a defeated and painfully lonely man. Yet he wrote *Le Rouge et le noir*, created the memorable characters, Julien Sorel and Fabrice del Dongo, and dictated, when he was near death and too weak to write, the magnificent *Chartreuse de Parme*. He died in 1842, almost completely unknown, predicting that in 1880 he would find his audience. He made immortal, for no apparent reason, the name of Stendhal, which he had borrowed from an obscure town in North Germany.

Seldom has there been a more difficult subject for biography. Except for a few obvious points—such as his idolatrous passion for Napoleon, whom he regarded as the heir of Alexander and Caesar—the direct connection between Stendhal's life and his work is extremely hard to establish. It might be plausibly maintained, as Herr Keyser suggests, that Stendhal invented in fiction the lives he failed to live, and that he created characters which epitomized the hidden qualities he felt in himself. His social philosophy, however—which he developed in a day when the mere concept in fiction of society as an organized force was so new as to be nearly non-existent—is unusually interesting and amply repays Rudolf Kayser's conscientious investigation.

This biography was not intended as a critical study. By making this clear in the beginning, Kayser apparently regards himself as relieved of the necessity for a detailed consideration of Stendhal's work. He dismisses *La Chartreuse de Parme*, for instance, with a bare page or two of aimless discussion. Yet he gives us, without permitting us to follow the steps by which they are reached, conclusions which are manifestly drawn from a study of the novels. In a book whose intention is purely informative, this method is certainly unsatisfactory and, if you will, a little unfair.

TOLSTOY: THE INCONSTANT GENIUS *by Alexander I. Nazaroff* (STOKES. $5.00)

OF ALL conceivable subjects for biography, a great and undisputed genius is perhaps the most difficult. The life of a statesman, a soldier, an adventurer, may be rendered in mere facts and events, and we are inclined to accept the rendition as satisfactory. But from the biographer of a genius—any genius, but most particularly a literary genius—we unconsciously demand something more. To be sure, we want to know who the man was, how he lived, what he did with his spare time. We are interested in the sources of his income and his preferences in food. We want to meet the persons he loved and hated, and who loved and hated him. But these things are the mere shell of the man. We want the phenomenon of his genius captured and explained. We want to exist for a vicarious interval inside his personality; we want to be made to feel and understand it.

As far as the facts of Tolstoy's background and the events of his career are concerned, Alexander Nazaroff has done here all that a conscientious biographer may do. He has

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